

https://dspace.org/

Performing manhood and fatherhood : A case study of men/fathers as symbolic mediums

Sigamoney, Veronica Lavinia

2008-10-20T12:07:54Z
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/5769

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

Performing manhood and fatherhood:
A case study of men/fathers as symbolic mediums

Veronica Sigamoney

A research report submitted to the Faculty of Arts, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Student Number: 0516466G
Department of Anthropology
Supervisor: Professor R. Thornton
December 2006

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It has not been submitted before, or for any other degree or examination at any other university.

_____

_____ day of _____

Contents

Acknowledgements i

Chapter 1: Introduction 1
Aim 1
Contextualising the research 5
Methodology 12
Theoretical framework: Key concepts, words, and phrases 14
Theoretical Approach 18
Relevance of this case study to a broader South African context 24

Chapter 2: The yard 31
The yard's sameness as a measure of its difference 32
The yard as representative of a class boundary 33
The yard made sense of as a racial body 38

Chapter 3: Performing the provider 41
Providing as a symbol of being good at being a man/father 41
Mapping the yard's meanings of kinship onto the bodies of its providers 45
Providing as a means to perform brotherhood 46

Chapter 4: Providing as a performance of tradition and change 49
Providing as a performance of tradition 49
Providing as a performance of cohesion and contest, tradition and change 53
Contesting the meanings of provider as kin body becomes class body 57
Commodifying the yard's traditions by reinterpreting the meanings of food 59

Chapter 5: Kin and gender identity in the yard 65
Meanings of kin identity narrated on the boundary of the skin 65
Negotiating the value of kin and gender identity on the cusp of blood and social relations 67
Discursive structures of scale that mediate the meanings of kin and gender identity 69
Race: A discourse that criss-crosses ideological boundaries of sameness and of difference 73

Chapter 6: Some relational constructions of kin and gender identity in the yard 77
A man/father is a man/father because a woman/mother is a woman/mother 77
How ideas of a worthless man/father construct the personae of a powerless woman/mother 78
Performing the yard's cultural lexicon in exchange for being good at 80

Chapter 7: The yard and its engagement of the social and genetic elements of kinship 84
Deconstructing incest and the limits it poses to the possibilities of kinship 88
Constructing the integrity of the family by scrambling and unscrambling the meanings of consanguinity 91
Reinventing fatherhood when the kin body is made manifest as class body 93

Chapter 8: Conclusion 95
Providing: Performance that reflects the imbrications of kinship 96
Accomodating multiple narratives of kinship and gender within and across cultural borderlands 101

Endnotes 106

References 107

Figures
Figure 1……... 64
Figure 2…… 89

Appendices

Appendix A: Kinship diagram connecting the people of the yard

Acknowledgements

I thank my supervisor, Professor Robert Thornton, for his constructive comments, useful insights and encouragement.

I owe a debt of gratitude to my informants for allowing me into their lives in new ways. Without their tolerance and generosity this work would not have been possible.

I thank my parents, Clement and Gloria, for encouraging me to begin again, and I thank Vernon and Talia for journeying with me, for keeping me on the path and for holding my hand along the way.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Aim

The aim of this research is to consider family as a kin network of exchange and to show that manhood and fatherhood is a cultural value transacted within this network. I attempt to also show that such value is variably negotiated as identity is performed in relation to ideological constructs of space. To do this, I explore the yard space to which kin belong as a cultural borderland, suggesting that men/fathers are able to exceed bounded constructs of identity while also being subject to them. In particular, I try to illuminate some of the dynamics that impact on men's/fathers' negotiation of discursive codes of intra-cultural sameness and difference to be valued not only as men/fathers, but as *good at* being men/fathers.

In a culturally heterogeneous country such as South Africa, dominant discourse plays a significant part in constructing identity. Gender, ethnic, and racial categories frequently cohere to produce a typecast image of the South African man of Indian descent. These images become cemented in the public imagination, impacting on intra-cultural and inter-cultural constructions of identity. In broad terms, parallels may be drawn between South American ideas of machismo and conceptualisations of the masculinity of the Indian man. In other words a man is only a real man if he is subject to the traditions that regulate his manhood. The family is considered as a breeding ground for many of these traditions, and it is these traditions that determine cultural value as they help to hierachise men into real men or *mukhus*.[1] This study explores the cultural value of man and father by drawing on the experiences and meanings of informants who, as a family, belong to a communal yard space. Within this context, the symbols of identity that enable a man/father to be *good at being* a man/father requires a focus on performances of providing in relation to performances of the social and genetic imbrications of kinship. In so doing meanings of kinship are explored in relation to ideological constructions of space as sameness and difference.

This study of masculinity and fatherhood is situated within a yard in Chatsworth. The yard to which my informants belong constructs and constitutes the physical and

symbolic space of a particular South African Indian family and is, in turn, constructed and constituted by them. As an ideological construct the yard therefore represents a two-way map of meaning. Here, the physical structure of house and yard defines a space of family and comes to stand for the identities of those who belong to it. Similarly, a particular ideology of family and identity defines the space of the yard. The architecture of house and yard, reflecting notions of kin, class, race and gender, thus comes to belong to the family also. I argue, however, that the boundaries within which space and identity connect are both fixed and arbitrary. Therefore, while the yard becomes a metaphor for family particularity and closed networks of exchange that lock in identity, it also manifests as a gateway that provides access to discursive structures of scale.

In this context, Sage, the business that is owned and run by the family, is significant. It represents the interests of the family and is thus impacted upon by the particular meanings and values exchanged within the kin network of the yard. As such, it represents an extension of the yard. However, it is also representative of networks that extend beyond the family, and which connect the men/fathers who own and manage it with a more global discourse. The encounter between such discursive structures of scale is, however, played out in complex ways. Here, the boundaries of family incorporate the business such that the global knowledge becomes almost subject to the yard's lexicon of sameness. In this context, the identity of man/father/businessman, although constructed and performed relationally, may appear to negotiate this transitional space almost seamlessly. In other words, the performance of fatherhood gives the business its rationale, and vice versa. This is the position taken by Jithen Reddy, whose motto is that "the business is the family, and the family is the business." Within this context of sameness, where the attachment between family and its symbolic resources constructs the value of each, I suggest that Jithen is able to mediate the symbols of his identity as man, father and provider for value as anti-commodity. Here, the concept of value is understood in terms of how things and people are made valuable through inter-subjective processes of signification. Shipton's (1989:10) reference to anti-commodities as the attachment between particular persons or groups and particular property of special kinds that is expected not to be broken is useful in this regard. In the context of this research property alludes to symbolic resources such as traditions and shared codes

of meaning. Interpreting and performing symbols of identity in line with these shared codes of meaning is, therefore, part of the process through which networks of sameness are constructed. It is also part of the process through which continuity between people and their resources are maintained such that identity comes to be valued as anti-commodity. Valued as anti-commodity Jithen is, therefore, strategically positioned on the continuum of self and worth, holding onto value that, in terms of the codes of meaning that are exchanged in the kin network, may be interpreted as being good at being a man/father.

While Jithen's brother, Sivan Reddy shares his motto to some extent, redrawing the yard boundaries also helps to reconstitute aspects of his identity. Here, the business, as a space that connects him to networks that exceed the kin network of exchange and the yard's lexicon of sameness, represents difference and autonomy. If Sivan is to retain his place in the yard as someone who belongs, his performances of difference must be processed within the kin network such that they become exchangeable for the value of 'being good at.' Negotiating symbols of difference such that they are made sense of within the yard's lexicon of sameness is, by implication, risky business. As part of the yard network, the business is a valuable resource, symbolic of traditions of providing, family allegiance and cohesion. If, however, it becomes conceived of as a space beyond the yard, the suggestion is that the lexicon of sameness has been breached. Operating from this reconceptualised space, man/father's performance of providing is no longer exchangeable for value as anti-commodity. As such, the provider and the family are liable for re-evaluation, shifting from a man/father who experiences himself as prestigious to a man/father who may feel used, raped, and commodified, as Sivan does. In this context, the danger of falling into otherness on the continuum of self and worth is ever present. Constructions and interpretations of value in relation to the mapping of ideological boundaries are not merely representative of assertions of sameness and of difference. Rather, it is about how the symbols of sameness and difference are mediated and ritually transformed such that they manifest as imbrications and not as dichotomies. At this level it is also representative of how local knowledge and tradition become translatable in terms of wider networks of discourse, and how, as "lived traditions" (Sahlins 1999) they also become expressions of modernity.

In this regard my data suggests that men's/fathers' control of the family business may mean different things in different contexts. Here, I argue that it is performance that signals shifts in contexts and therefore shifts in cultural value. In the quest for specific value in time and space men/fathers must therefore tune into the yard's lexicon and, through negotiating the appropriate symbols of identity, act themselves into reality. Engaged in such performance, they may be conceived of as symbolic mediums.

In a society characterized by social and economic disparities, where violence against women and children and men's abandonment of their children are pervasive, it is important to look beyond popular discourse for insight. Identifying and subsequently explaining away power differentials between husband and wife by, for instance, typecasting men as empowered through access and control of economic resources and women as oppressed by the burden of domesticity and childcare, merely re-inscribes gendered stereotypes. The gender dynamics of the yard, while peculiar to the yard, may however, offer an alternative perspective to dominant discourse on male power and control. If, within a particular family, being a powerful man is proportional to being good *at* being a man, symbols of such power become valuable within a kin network of exchange. Considering masculinity as constructed within an economy of self and worth may help us to understand why fatherhood is linked to the ability to provide and why emasculation is linked to unemployment. Where such lack of status is evident, it prompts us to assess the value of other symbols of manhood, such as aggression and physicality, and to question why they are drawn upon, and whether their performance, at some level, reconstitutes the lack. Similarly, providing may be an important, though not the only, symbol of being good at being a man.

'Being a man' or being *good at* being a man?

A father who is a good provider may need to participate in regular boys' nights out to demonstrate to the other men in his group, including brothers and other male kin, that he is the boss, or the "king of the jungle," as Sivan terms it. In a communal family space such as the yard, their wives may also be subject to the yard's regulation of womanhood/motherhood. In this context, rising from sleep to serve supper for their husbands demonstrates that they are good at being women (Sivan Reddy: Interview). In

this way the gender dynamics of the yard have broader social relevance. The question this poses is not why women are subjugated and why men are dominant, but why is there such an emphasis on being *good at* being a man or a woman, and what are the symbols of cultural value that make one *good at*. The corollary is to explore the existential and identity crises that those who are unable to perform their excellence, and thus to hold onto their position on the continuum of self and worth, experience. This is especially so if the yard as a microscopic representation of particular social groups, in this case wealthy South African fathers of Indian descent living in Chatsworth, is also, to some extent, a representation of the community around it. The yard in relation to its people therefore comes to represent a crossroads of discursive structures of scale.

Contextualising the research

Sivan Reddy and his older brother, Jithen, own houses on a plot of land in Silverglen, a middle class Indian residential area that sits on the fringes of the sprawling Indian township of Chatsworth in Durban. This plot, approximately a hectare, has been sub-divided. Jithen, his mother, and his wife and children live in a house on the front section. This section of the property faces the road. The house that Sivan owns is situated behind Jithen's house. A carport, from which a short flight of stairs leads into Sivan's front garden, is all that separates the two houses. Palisade fencing does, however, border the entire property and a tall steel gate provides access to it from the road. Informants refer to this property as the yard. Historically, the house in which Jithen and his family live was inherited from his father who died shortly after he had bought the land on which the house now stands. It was the house in which he and Sivan were raised since the ages of nine and five respectively. Both brothers married before they were twenty-one and continued to live in this house together with their wives, and mother. Sivan's wife's name is Sayah. She is also Sivan's sister's daughter. According to Sivan's mother, Uma, their fathers arranged their marriage when Sivan was approximately eight years old and Sayah was three. Sayah married Sivan when she was 16 years old. Jithen's wife's name is Gita; she married him when she was 18 years old. Approximately five years passed after his marriage before Sivan, with the support of his brother, began building his house at the back of the yard. Both Sivan and Jithen have three children. Nilesh is Sivan's youngest child. He is 18 years old. Sivan also has two

daughters, Nivi and Kalay, aged 22 and 20, respectively. Nivi, however, is Jithen and Gita's biological child. At birth, she was given to Sivan and Sayah since Sayah had difficulty conceiving during the first few years of marriage. Jithen's eldest child is Naveen. He is 24 and has married recently. He no longer lives in the yard. Sagrie, is 22 years old and has also married and moved out of the yard. Praveen, Jithen and Gita's youngest child is 20 years old and continues to live with his parents.

Uma, as Jithen's and Sivan's mother is referred to in the yard, is in her early eighties and virtually bedridden. She has lived with Jithen and his nuclear family for most of her life. Ever since Gita married Jithen and moved into the yard, she has performed the role of companion to Uma. She has also been responsible for all domestic work in the front section of the yard. This has included cooking, cleaning, and childcare responsibilities. As Uma's health has deteriorated, Jithen, and the extended yard family have also expected Gita, to become her caregiver. Sayah's performance of wife, mother and woman in the yard parallels Gita's in many respects. Since she moved into her own house at the back section of the yard she has, however, been relatively freed from the responsibility of caring for Uma. Like Gita, Sayah is renowned throughout the extended family for her cooking and baking skills. Their reputation among family, neighbours and friends as women who keep well cleaned homes, well tended gardens, who cook and bake well and whose husbands and children are always well turned out in freshly laundered clothing, is a matter of pride for them, their husbands, and the yard in general.

Approximately ten years ago Jithen left his job as a bookkeeper and with Sivan's support and guidance started a chemical company that manufactures a range of detergents for domestic and industrial use. Soon after Sivan resigned from his job as a senior engineer at PetroSA and joined the family business. In this research I refer to the business by the name: The Sage Group, hereinafter referred to as Sage. With Jithen assuming responsibility for the financial management and Sivan responsible for the development and marketing of products, Sage has grown into a very profitable concern and has branched out into a number of subsidiaries. Currently, Sage operates from two business premises situated in an industrial area approximately 10 kilometres away from the yard. Sivan is at the helm of the one factory and as his children have finished school,

they have begun to work as junior managers of the various departments in his factory. Nivi and Kalay in involved in administrative work, including debtors and creditors control, while Nilesh is involved in the sales of a newly developed chemical product that his father has marketed successfully in Brazil. Jithen runs the other factory where Naveen, his eldest son, acts as junior manager cum assistant to his father, while Sagrie and Praveen work in the accounting department.

Two years ago, Sivan left his wife and children and moved out of his house and out of the yard. He now lives in a luxury penthouse apartment that is considered prime real estate along Durban's north coast. Prior to leaving the yard, it would not be exaggeration to state that the discourse of the yard exerted considerable influence over Sivan's identity and life experience. This is especially evident given the fact that except for the first five years of his life that he spent with his mother, father and siblings in Clairwood,[2] Sivan has lived in the yard for 38 of his 46 years, and for 22 of those 38 years he has been married. He says: "I got married young. I was 20. I never had life experiences outside what I knew in the family. I began to think that there must be something more and only since I left I am discovering that there is so much more to life…" The yard as a metaphor for family particularity and isolation is therefore very real for those whose identities continue to be bound by it.

However, Sivan, Jithen, and their children, continue to see, and interact with, one another almost on a daily basis at Sage. In this social setting, Sivan, together with his children, his brother and his niece and nephews are also able to perform an extension of the family. Together, the regularly share food that they have bought or brought from home, and the goings-on of the business, or its integrity, as they call it, is protected from external threat by invocations of their internal code of family honour. The success of the business is therefore a symbol of their allegiance to one another as family. As such, it is also a symbol of their continued performance of a valued tradition of family. Here then, Sage and the family, as subject to the yard's kin economy of exchange, may be conceived of as anti-commodities.[3]

In this family, the performance of providing is a core symbol of manhood/fatherhood. Sivan states repeatedly that his and Jithen's primary role is to provide. It is the legacy left to them by their father who Sivan says taught them "never to let [their] families knock on anyone else's door for a plate of food." This represents something that "has been engrained onto our bodies," he says. The business represents, therefore, a resource that enables a valuable tradition of family, and of masculine identity, to be performed. This evokes the idea of how tradition, as representative of continuity, once again facilitates attachment between people and their symbolic resources, or property of special kinds, as Shipton (1989:10) calls it. This attachment enables shared codes of meaning within which interpretations and performances of the symbols of kin and gender identity are made sense of and rendered exchangeable for value as anti-commodities. In this way the ideological boundaries of the yard, insofar as they pertain to the image and identities of men/fathers and family, are reinforced.

To the extent that the business provides a stage on which yard traditions may be performed, it represents a persuasive idiom of family. In this context the business, may be conceived of as an extension of the ideological space of the yard. Sivan, as man, brother, and as father, is also an extension of this space, able to draw on the symbols of a particular kin network of exchange to act these roles into reality. While co-residence is an important symbol of family stability, cohesion and hence of family value, Sivan's case suggests that the man who chooses not to reside with his family, yet who is still able to give an excellent performance of providing, may nonetheless be highly valued. However, this man/father has the status of both insider and outsider. This in itself has altered the context of tradition in the yard. Within this context of change, the imbrications between father and provider, also a yard tradition, no longer seems to work as it once did. Here, Sivan feels that in the kin network of exchange, the value he transacts as a provider does not always guarantee him the place he desires in his family's lives as a father. As a result he experiences himself as prestigious as well as raped and used. Sivan's value as provider/father continues, therefore, to be regulated by discursive structures within the yard's network of kin exchange. However, space is also created for the shifting meanings of provider/father within the network because as a man/father who belongs to the yard, he continues to perform the provider. On the other

hand, as a man/father whose network extends beyond the yard he seeks ways to assert his autonomy and re-invent himself, his performances reflecting what Herzfeld (1988) refers to as self-regard. I argue therefore, that the ways in which the ideological space of the yard is conceptualised, as representative of sameness and tradition, or as representative of sameness and tradition as well as difference and change is about how cultural boundaries are interpreted and perceived.

Similarly, Sayah's value has also been reconfigured in the kin network of exchange. Shortly after Sivan moved out of the house, Sayah commercialised her cooking and baking skills. A significant amount of her time is now dedicated to the commodification of food, although she continues to cook for her children, herself, and occasionally for Sivan. She runs her small catering business from the kitchen of her home. Within the cultural lexicon of the yard, cooking for one's family is an important symbol of woman, wife and mother. This, for example, was evidenced by the fact that informants, almost without exception, were perplexed about who would cook for my family in my absence. By commodifying her cooking skills, Sayah performs difference and tampers with the cultural lexicon of the yard. This points to how the yard's shared meanings of wife, mother, and woman have been affected as a result of some of the surplus meanings of its network being made manifest. Here, on the continuum of self and worth, Sayah's value shifts from being good at being a woman/mother to being, as Jithen refers to her, "a rubbish."

The symbolic value of provider, and hence of man/father, is therefore dependent on how the cultural space of family is mapped. Providing thus becomes a performance to realize the value of being good at man/father; it also, however, becomes a performance to realize the value of the self. These values, or identities, are not always mutually reinforcing, even if they should manifest as continuous identities. This would seem to hold sway especially with regards to Jithen who continues to live in the yard and whose performance of providing remains interwoven with his performance of "father of the yard" (Sivan Reddy March 2006). Although Jithen's performance seems to echo the yard's lexicon within which particular meanings of man/father/provider are constructed, I would argue that sameness is also a process that requires constant effort and

involvement to negotiate. Hastrup's views on change and continuity support this and paraphrasing Moore's argument, she states that there is nothing mechanical even about sameness and that, "even continuity takes an effort on the part of social agents" (1997:353). I would suggest then, that Jithen's construction of self requires the ideological space of the yard to be part of an integrated space. The borders of this space would incorporate the family business and Sage, as an extension of himself, also represents an extension of his influence in the yard.

For Sivan, the symbols of sameness and continuity are also important. These symbols facilitate a level of common understanding in the yard and Sivan knows that accessing and performing these symbols of manhood/fatherhood in a particular way will provide him with a particular reward. Here, the yard of sameness leaves its imprint on Sivan's body as he notes that providing is the driving force behind himself and Jithen and that it has been "engrained onto our bodies by our father who taught us never to let ourselves and our families knock on anyone else's door for a plate of food, for anything" (March 2006). As the embodiment of providers, Sivan and Jithen's entire identity seems to be bound to performing the yard's primary symbol of manhood/fatherhood. In this context, they both become subject to its borders of sameness.

However, as a man who no longer lives in the yard, and who is experiencing conflict between his value as a provider and as a father, Sivan's identity is also fractured. While the symbols of identity in the network of sameness are required, they are also insufficient. By moving out of the yard, Sivan contests a tradition of fatherhood. However, by continuing to perform the role of the provider, insofar as providing constitutes a primary symbol of gender and kin identity, he remains subject to the yard's lexicon of particularity. His skill as a symbolic medium able to negotiate sameness and difference, belonging and marginality, is therefore crucial if his performance of providing is to be exchanged for value as anti-commodity within the kin network. In this scenario, Sivan, as needing to belong to the yard's culture of sameness also constructs the yard space as a kin co-operative that includes the business. However, as a fractured identity, he seeks an alternative, albeit related, space. The yard therefore becomes recast such that the business alludes to a wider cultural network, representing

an ideological space beyond the yard. In this alternative space, the aspects of selfhood that he experiences as insufficiently valued in the yard, can be re-invented and re-evaluated. In this way, the contested and ambiguous boundaries of the yard also map their meanings onto Sivan's body. The yard and the person, therefore represent a two-way map of meaning, or using Sax's (1998) metaphor, a two-way mirror that reflects the sameness and the difference of the Self and the Other.

In performing the symbols of manhood/fatherhood, Sivan negotiates constructions of sameness and difference such that he is neither marooned on the outside of the yard, nor submerged in its core. In other words, his identity is neither wholly subject to the regulations of the yard, nor wholly exempt from it. Belonging is therefore not categorical. Through performance of the symbols of manhood/fatherhood he becomes masculine body, kin body, racial body, and commodified/class body. These bodies, bearing the imprint of variable constructions of the yard, are valued as well-regulated prestigious bodies that, at the same time, are also in a state of fracture and dissolution. I emphasise, however, that this does not mean that his body in performing any, and all, of these inter-subjective roles is trapped in an impasse. Instead, he must use his skill as a symbolic medium to foreground sameness in certain contexts and difference in others, balancing them, often precariously, such that he does not fall off the continuum of self and worth, becoming a worthless man, or what the yard's informants term a "mukhu," or a "worthla." I attempt to argue therefore, that the process of becoming a man/father/self requires negotiating a precarious "dialectic of sameness and difference" (Sax 1998). While most of this study focuses on how the yard constructs its cultural particularity, such particularity, as mentioned previously, is not discussed as something that is natural or self-evident in terms of ideas of kinship, gender, race or class. Rather, the cultural lexicon of the yard network must be negotiated such that its identities and its social structure are processed in relation to each other, and in relation to difference.

In this case study, Sivan Reddy's claim to fatherhood is not contingent on the biology that decrees him male or genitor, nor is it contingent on his race or any other single factor. He represents men/fathers whose subjectivity sits in tension with the imperative to be good *at* being a man/father.

Methodology

The ethnography is based on a case study of a particular Indian family in Durban conducted intermittently between September 2005 and September 2006. During this period visits usually lasted between ten days and two weeks at a time. By the end of September 2006, I had spent just under ten weeks engaged in field research. For most of this time I lived with a relative of my informants, an elderly woman who was also well known to my husband. Access to informants and the physical space that they belonged to, referred to in this research as: the yard, was significantly facilitated in this way. It also helped that the yard was situated two streets away from where I lived.

Research site

The research pertained to constructions of a particular ideological space, namely a yard located in Silverglen in Durban. Much of the data was gathered during time spent within the physical boundaries of this particular landscape.

Methods of data collection

Although I had a general idea of the methods that I wished to use, for the most part I took my cue from informants. The degree of comfort between myself, as researcher, and different informants was not consistent and in different contexts I found that discretion and circumstance tended to inform the choice of research technique. In general, however, unstructured conversations and observations yielded valuable data and insights. Although informants and I were already relatively familiar with one another and had met over a number of years, particularly during social events such as weddings and the occasional religious ceremony, awareness of the changed context between us prompted me, although not always my informants, to consider every situation within which we engaged as part of the ethnographic project. At the request of informants, and in terms of usual practice, the identities of informants have been kept anonymous. Pseudonyms have been used in all instances. This includes the name of the family business and other places through which they may otherwise be identified.

Apart from time spent in the yard, particularly with the women with whom relations were far more informal, research was also conducted in various other locations in

Durban. The men of the yard, in particular, preferred to be interviewed outside the yard. It was only towards the end of my time in the field that I understood that for them to be seen talking at length to a woman whom they had previously treated as little more than a stranger would have been unusual. More than this it would have put them in the category of women who gossip and cause trouble for others. For this reason, semi-structured interviews and conversations took place at coffee shops at Durban Airport, and in car parks at shopping centres. This does not imply that I was not privy to numerous exchanges and interactions among the men, women and children of the yard. My time spent at the houses in the yard, sometimes leaving after dark and just before bed-time, time spent at my host's house when informants from the yard frequently came to visit, and during the times when I accompanied them to shopping malls, casinos, and the beach, meant that together with conversations I was also able to undertake observation research. I knew when informants had argued and were saying things in anger or jealousy, for example. I also had the advantage of, via my host, having access to the extended family grapevine and was able to corroborate many of the informant's stories as other relatives visiting my host discussed them with her. Of course, in this way I was also able to get leads on when something worth talking about had happened in the yard and often I was able to follow them up, visiting particular informants in the yard.

Key Questions

- Is there an imperative to be good at being a man/father? If so, why?
- What are the symbols of being good at and how are they performed and exchanged for value?
- What are the shared codes of meaning relating to constructions of kin identity?
- How do meanings of race, class and gender intersect with the meanings of kin identity?
- How do traditions evolve within the yard's particular discursive space and how do they work to construct identity and structure the limits of authority?
- How do engagements between discursive structures of scale impact on interpretations and performances of symbols of identity?

- Is there disjuncture between the ideologies of family, manhood and fatherhood and the ways in which those ideologies are experienced? If so what are some of the idioms of reinterpretation?

Theoretical framework: Key concepts, words and phrases

Manhood and fatherhood

Manhood and fatherhood are considered as gendered and kin constructs. The focus on masculine identity is based on what men/fathers say and do to be men/fathers within the context of a kin network.

Brotherhood

In this particular kin network of exchange, blood and sociality overlap to construct the multiple identities of men. For instance, biological brothers also perform the social relationship of father and son.

Provider

In this ethnography men and fathers become valued as men and fathers through the performance of providing for their families. Providers are responsible for the financial security and the personal protection of their families.

The yard

The yard is a reference to the ideological landscape to which this family belongs. In this context, the yard and the people who inhabit its space are representative of a two-way map of meaning such they construct and reinforce each other. The yard boundaries delineate. As representative of a discursive structure of scale, it may also be conceived of as a cultural borderland within which the boundaries of sameness and difference, the local and the global, and tradition and modernity are drawn. As such, it defines the space of cultural insiders as well as the space that exceeds its borders and acts as a space of marginality. Meanings and performances of gender, kinship, race and class are thus impacted upon within this context.

Family

Those who claim belonging to the yard and are in turn claimed by them are considered as the family of the yard. In the yard, family is organized around a genealogical descent group, comprising two brothers, their biological mother, their wives and their biological children. While consanguinity and/or affinity provides the framework for conceptualising belonging, persuasive idioms of family hinge on the quality of social relations. In the yard, kin identity and the value that it is accorded, is contingent on how the symbols of kinship, including the genetic and the social, are mediated and performed.

Sameness and difference

I use this theoretical construct to show that the yard acts as a space of boundaries and boundary crossings. In this ideological space, the yard as a microcosm of cultural particularity is not merely representative of inter-cultural difference, but also of intra-cultural sameness and difference. In the context of a space of sameness, the yard may be conceived of as representative of a particular lexicon within which shared codes of meaning are negotiated. The yard boundaries may thus be seen as a defence of this lexicon. More than a protection from the potential danger of the outside, it is also about the dynamics of power. Errington and Gewurtz's (2001) ideas on the generification of culture have relevance here, especially insofar as it leads to the yard's lexicon being contested. In these contexts, space becomes re-mapped and reinterpreted to make sense of altered meanings, altered circumstances, and thus of change. In this case study I draw, therefore, on Sax's (1998) idea of the "dialectics of sameness and difference." Where the metaphorical gateway of the yard locks in the inside yet simultaneously opens out onto the outside, I suggest that the data shows that sameness and difference, and belonging and marginality are but measures of each other.

Network of kin exchange

Kinship in the yard space is narrated in a particular language and its value, made manifest in performance, depends on how the symbols that mark kin identity are acted into being. This language incorporates symbols of intra-cultural sameness and intra-cultural difference, as well as inter-cultural difference, since the meanings that construct Us may also be contested, thus setting up difference. The kin network of exchange may,

therefore, be conceived of as a cultural lexicon. Here, the discursive codes of sameness and difference are accessed, negotiated and, via performance, rendered meaningful and thus exchangeable for value. This is in line with Abu-Lughod's approach to culture in which distinctions between ideation and practice are refused (Brightman 1995). The symbol of manhood/fatherhood that I am mainly concerned with pertains to: man/father as a provider. The identity of man/father is, however, constructed in relation to the other kin identities in the yard and the symbols that are at work in constructing the identities of, for instance, woman/mother are also considered.

Further, I argue that in the kin network of exchange, performances of being good at being a man/father, in this case providing, interweaves with other symbols of kinship, gender, race and class. With respect to this, I focus on the relational aspects of genetic and social meanings of kinship, taking cognisance of the ways in which these meanings impact on other aspects of identity. This helps to substantiate my argument that identity is multi-dimensional and that its value is contingent on an actor's skill as symbolic medium. The kin network may therefore be viewed as comprised of social actors who are negotiating co-presence in a contact zone (Hastrup 1997). Given that cultural meanings vary even within homogenous groups, the contact zone may be perceived as the place at which cultural lexicons meet so that common meanings can emerge.[4] The cultural value of man's/father's identity therefore becomes recognizable and thus measurable when these merged meanings are delivered on through the performances of manhood/fatherhood.

Notably, however, the kin network of exchange is a useful conceptual tool to illustrate that the borders within which the meanings of sameness and difference are transacted are not fixed. Hastrup (1997), for example, notes the potential for surplus meanings in the contact zone. Sameness then, in much the same way as tradition, is gauged not as an indicator of a rigid homogeneity that has marched unchecked through time and space. It must be negotiated. The same can be said of difference since the production of surplus meanings allows for the reinterpretation of circumstances that can no longer be made sense of by shared meanings. In the context of the yard, variable constructions of the yard space shift the boundaries of inside and outside and, therefore, the boundaries of

sameness and difference. Value as both subject to social structure as well as exceeding social structure, is therefore an important theme.

Symbolic medium

In becoming value, man/father must therefore negotiate access and control over a range of symbols in the kin network of exchange so that they become meaningful to his audience. Social action is therefore emphasized in the construction and valuation of identity. In this context, Hastrup (1997) notes that it is the technical artistry of the actor, rather than the action itself, that makes performance meaningful. If man's/father's status and identity depends on his skills as a symbolic medium, the value of a man/father can range from worthless at being man/father to excellent at being man/father.

Continuum of self and worth

This refers to a metaphorical rating scale ranging from values of worthlessness to excellence on which man/father attempts to position himself.

Performance

In the kin network of exchange the symbols of identity that construct manhood and fatherhood, womanhood and motherhood are often presented as family tradition. These symbols must, however, be transformed into "lived traditions" (Sahlins 1999) by moving from the sphere of expectation to the sphere of delivery. To be made real and credible, identity must be acted into being. For the men of the yard, being good at being a man/father therefore requires excellent performances of providing. However, in time and space, these performances emphasize collective kin responsibility as well as self-regard. Such performances, if not regulated within the closed kin network of exchange, may be indicators of surplus meanings that must be made sense of beyond the yard boundaries. I draw on Herzfeld's (1988) ideas on performance in this regard.

Value as anti-commodity and commodity

Shipton (1989:10) refers to anti-commodities as the attachment between particular persons or groups and particular property of special kinds that is expected not to be broken. In the context of this research, property alludes to symbolic resources, including the traditions of the yard, which construct and regulate belonging to a particular ideological space. Mediating shared codes of meaning and performing the symbols of

identity in exchange for value is, therefore, an important way in which to maintain the connection between people and the cultural lexicon used to make sense of their lives. Processing meaning and performance through what amounts to a kin economy of exchange is crucial, therefore, in terms of how identity comes to be valued as anti-commodity. A network of sameness is thus emphasised. In instances where the interpretation and performance of the symbols of identity contest the yard's shared codes of meaning, the element of continuity between people and their resources shifts. The corollary is that the value that was created in the network of sameness changes. In this altered context, identity is re-evaluated and experienced as consumed by the group. It thus becomes commodified. The concept of value is therefore understood in terms of how things and people are made valuable through inter-subjective processes of signification.

Theoretical Approach

This case study of a particular kin grouping who, as family, consider themselves as belonging to a bounded landscape, has resulted in research that is small in scale. The fact that I did not research a number of men in a number of families means, therefore, that I am not in a position to use the data as part of comparative analysis. This, however, does not infer that research into microcosms of cultural particularity, especially insofar as such particularity intersects with intra-cultural and inter-cultural discourses of scale, is not relevant in wider contexts. Instead of focusing on amassing data on many men's experiences of fatherhood, this study, I believe, has benefited from an approach that has yielded relatively in-depth material about complex dynamics pertaining to the meanings of kin and gender identity, and the specific cultural value attributed to such identity within a particular kin network. The fact that I had access not only to men/fathers, but also to their wives, their sons and daughters, their mother, nephews, nieces, brother-in-law and sister-in-law, also meant that men's/father's identities and the ways in which this linked with the imperative and performance of being good at being a man, could be researched and analysed in relation to the identities of others within the yard's kin network. Apart from a genealogical frame of reference this, insofar as my time in the field allowed, has resulted in knowledge of complex interpersonal relations. Further, such data could be gleaned through primary means and not just, as I had found in

preliminary research attempts, indirectly through men's/father's opinions of their wives and children. Although my work is far more limited, in this regard, I found some reassurance in Abu-Lughod's (1986) ethnography of a single kin group among the Bedouin, in which she notes her anxiety about what it means to do anthropology wondering whether she was missing the mark by not extending her focus and going, as she puts it, "door to door (1986:17). However, she notes that her growing familiarity and intimacy with a small kin group produced data of a quality that deterred her from seeking quantity via superficial conversations with strangers. Further, in terms of my anxiety of the yard being representative of other Indian families and men/fathers in the wider community, the answer, based on my knowledge of neighbours and other families that I have interacted with as a cultural insider, is perhaps an ambiguous yes and no. Of greater significance, however, is the idea that despite degrees of similarity the yard may also be conceived of a microcosm of cultural particularity. Here, I draw on Abu-Lughod's (1986:23) idea that "unique cultures develop in any close community, including individual families…" In this context, the yard is a space of sameness, but also of uniqueness. It is therefore problematic to guess at how representative the yard is. This does not however invalidate it since identity as constructed and performed in the yard, a space representative of both sameness and difference surely has parallels with ideas of South African kin, gender, race, and class based identity, insofar as it is played out within the multiculturalist politics of diversity and nation building.

Although anthropologists are purveyors of difference, the idea that homogeneity does not preclude manifestations of otherness helps to put the issue of insider research into perspective. I was born in Chatsworth, Durban and lived there with my parents and siblings for a number of years. Since leaving I have, however, been back at least twice a year usually to visit family and/or to attend a wedding, birthday, or funeral of some or other relative that I have not seen in a long time. I am, therefore, familiar with the physical and cultural demographics of the area. I am also, as mentioned earlier, familiar with my informants by virtue of my husband's relationship with my host, and I have interacted with members of the yard, particularly the women and children, on previous occasions. Although I had exchanged cursory greetings with the men of the yard, it was not until my research that we engaged in conversations, and that they, generous with

their time and stories within this altered context, gradually became my key informants. Despite the degree of familiarity with which I entered the field, the people of the yard were nonetheless strangers in many respects. Fieldwork, in whatever context, as Hastrup (1997) implies is a process of engagement and participation, neither of which is mutually exclusive. In relation to this, she views culture as meaning made through shared experience in the contact zone, a space conceived of as a sphere of negotiation where cultures meet and meanings merge to create knowledge – knowledge that does not belong completely to either the anthropologist or the informant who, as social actors, are engaged in its creation (1997:352). This highlights the fact that inasmuch as anthropology is a foray into the world of the unfamiliar, such difference is made familiar as it is processed through lexicons of sameness and cultural comparability. In the contact zone of the yard then, I may be conceived of as much an Other as the informants. Further, as Others in this negotiated space, we both become cultural outsiders and insiders, albeit to varying degrees. Illustrating this by way of ethnographic example, Sivan Reddy, a key informant, says he trusts me with his stories because he says: "you are one of us." At the same time, Sivan Reddy and another informant, Suren Pather, state that they are willing to confide in me because I am different from the other women in the yard in that I want to know things because I am educated and not because I like to gossip.

This resonates with what Sax (1998:293) in his critique of Edward Said's Orientalism[5] calls, "the dialectics of sameness and difference." Here, Sax states that Said proposed caution when emphasizing difference between cultures, since divisions into "us" and "them", results in hostility – a hostility that prejudices one's perceptions of different cultures regardless of the positive knowledge that one may acquire about those cultures. Sax disputes this, suggesting that not only are Others different in and among themselves, but also because the anthropologist is as different to the Others as they are to him/her. Viewed in this way, Othering is a two way process, the space where difference and sameness intersect, and where Sax's *Hall of Mirrors*[6] relates to Hastrup's idea of the contact zone, namely that, "people do not live in different worlds, they live differently in the world" (1997:352). While reflexivity may thus seem to favour me in my status as insider anthropologist it is by no means mine alone. It has, however,

facilitated an increased awareness of my voice in this research, together with the issue of representation. Clifford (1986:1-26), for example, emphasizes ethnographic accounts and the representation of culture in its written form – as text making. In this way, cultural accounts are viewed as created, suggesting therefore, that representing culture is anything but neutral or objective. As such, ethnography goes beyond the range of text, its fiction becoming caught up with meanings and knowledge that is selected, disregarded or distilled during the interpretative process. I use these insights, therefore, to note that this work is anything but an ethnographic monograph, and while it is a case study on fatherhood and manhood, I have elicited data from informants who, although not men or fathers themselves, impact on the constructions of those identities. My method thus involves finding value in Sapir's apparent paradox, paraphrased by Rodseth: " [That] the multiple subjectivities of any account must be represented with great realism lest the very objectivity of that account be diminished" (1998:62).

Apart from helping to place myself within this research, Sax's (1998) ideas pertaining to the dialectic of sameness and difference forms a key theoretical approach that has also helped to connect and give coherence to my ethnography as a whole. In this context, the yard, as a particular ideological space is conceived of as a two-way map of meaning within which people and the space that they inhabit map their meanings onto each other. Here, each is inter-subjective, rather than opposed to the other, and the metaphor of mapping echoes Sax's idea of self and Other reflected in a hall of mirrors. Further, in time and space then, the yard's meanings may be shared, contested or ambiguous. Difference is therefore not negated in a yard that is representative of cultural particularity. A common thread thus interweaves theory, method, and data as, through my approach and arguments, I suggest that sameness is a measure of difference, and that each is performed in relation to the other. This is especially useful as I try to illustrate the relational dynamics of ideology and performance within the context of the social and genetic elements of kin identity.

Extending Sax's (1998) theory further, I also relate it to Hastrup's (1997) idea that meaning is made through processes within which the sharing of ideological space is negotiated rather than guaranteed. In this context I consider how symbols of kin,

gender, race and class construct identity, and how regulated by what I term the yard's kin network of exchange, these symbols are performed and transacted for value. The kin network of exchange may, therefore be conceived of as an economy of meaning, its potential for surplus similar to the contact zone, spawning idioms of change and facilitating processes of reconceptualisation.

Notes on constraints and advantages to fieldwork

Although I had done the research proposal, the parameters of what I could discover and focus on were, in many ways, determined by experiences in the field. I had begun research with men from three other families before deciding to concentrate on the yard, finding in the initial three cases that the scope of who I could speak to and interact with was severely limited. For instance, after finding a place to stay with my host, I made contact with another family in Chatsworth. My parents had known them a number of years ago and they agreed to have me stay with them for a few days. Although I explained my interests and we spent much of the time talking, they were reluctant to volunteer information of a personal nature. They spoke instead about what they knew about other people. Further, the father, mother and son would only talk about my research when they were together. At these times the father and son would talk about the other fathers they knew while the mother would nod and corroborate whatever they said. As a guest in their home, I enjoyed their hospitality but although I asked to accompany them when they went to visit their relatives and their married daughters, I was told very nicely that, "only family would be there." As a result I did not attend a religious ceremony that marked the start of the holy month of fasting and prayer that preceded the celebration of Diwali.[7] Their son, a Brahman would be reciting the prayers for the family and I was told that it would not be appropriate for an outsider to be present. In short I struggled to get access and get beyond polite conversation. The man/father in the other family that agreed to speak to me also discussed family and gender in a detached way, referring constantly to men in general. My impression was that men were surprised that I wanted to focus on them and understand their meanings and experiences of fatherhood and gender, and that they weren't quite sure about how to deal with this unusual interest.

Nevertheless, my opportunity to change this frustrating lack of success in the field was presented one Saturday evening when Kavi Ma, as my host was known, was invited to supper in the yard. My husband was visiting at the time and the both of us were invited as well. During supper, I spoke briefly about my work and the people who were there were both amazed and dismayed by the fact that I had stayed overnight in the house of strangers. The Indian women that they knew, and many that I knew, didn't do such things. There was impropriety and personal risk involved. I felt slightly uncomfortable, realising that by not coming to them first, I may have caused insult since going 'outside' suggested that those who knew me had withheld their hospitality. I was subsequently told that I did not need to "go back there" and to the consent of almost everyone at the table, Sayah Reddy, Sivan's wife, said "use us for your work, we don't mind." With hindsight I have begun to think that my husband's silence on the subject was probably the best thing since nobody was quite sure what his stance on the matter was. I can only guess about how it was interpreted and have wondered if somehow it impacted on their decision to become informants. When I asked if they were sure, Dashni, Sayah's sister cut in, saying that I shouldn't think that they won't tell me the truth and that the things they tell me will be similar to the things that happen in their neighbour's houses anyway. I immediately asked Suren, Dashni's husband, when I could speak with him and Priven, his 22-year-old son began laughing, saying that I should speak to them without asking. Asking would make them self-conscious and I wouldn't get as much "juicy stuff," he said, adding that I needed to learn how to "operate like a real Indian." Suffice to say, I needed no further invitation and because of my previous experiences during the preliminary stages of my research, I felt that because Sivan Reddy belonged to the yard although he no longer lived there, he would not be able to readily limit my access to other members of his family, particularly his wife and children, and vice versa. Moreover, the yard with its incidence of incest, communality, and as an extension of the family business presented interesting possibilities within which research into manhood and fatherhood could be situated.

With regards to "operating like a real Indian," I was plagued by constant anxiety relating to ethics, especially when the women of the yard seemed to frequently forget that I was there as a researcher. I often felt cast in the role of confidante and Sayah, free

and easy with her speech, never seemed to watch what she said in front of me. With Sivan, I sometimes felt as though I was performing a great deception by playing into his idea of me as "one of us." As a cultural insider, I had a reasonable idea of what that meant and adjusted my demeanour and my language, expressing contrition when Sivan, for example, wondered about who would cook for my family in my absence. At the same time, however, I was aware that I still had to stand out from the other women who he wouldn't necessarily confide in. The very fact that I was a married mother away from her family in pursuit of my own academic interests seemed to assert this difference. Further, adjusting the way I dressed, and playing up my accent, all helped to do this, I think. More than this, however, he, like Suren, seemed to see me as different because I wanted to learn about their perspectives on manhood and fatherhood, noting that many women they knew were not interested in finding out about who they were without finding out about the material things he could give them.

I was to learn then that Priven was right and that "operating like a real Indian" did not necessarily allude to dominant stereotypes of Indians as crafty and shrewd operators. I came to realise that in real terms it meant that informants wanted to go about their daily business without being reminded that someone was watching. They chose, I think to construct my presence as benign rather than intrusive, more, perhaps for their own benefit than for mine. It was for this reason that I was often unable to use a tape recorder and had to jot brief notes or transcribe things from memory. Nevertheless, the lesson learned was that my angst about operating like a real Indian was a clash between my cultural lexicon and theirs, more than it was about the ethics of right and wrong. After all, to ask when I had explicitly been told not to would be to impose my way over theirs. It would defeat the purpose of gaining insight and knowledge into this particular discourse of difference.

Relevance of this case study to a broader South African context

"The melting pot," and the "rainbow nation," are two popular phrases within which South Africa's cultural heterogeneity and quest for nationhood have been merged. While part of a multi-culturalist discourse, such clichés bring into focus the difficulties of protecting the boundaries of cultural particularity, particularity that becomes

increasingly legible through processes of what Errington and Gewurtz (2001) term cultural generification.[8] Particular meanings of family and the kin and gender identities they help to construct thus become distorted, lost and reinterpreted within dominant discourses. In these master narratives, the particular identities of men and fathers are rewritten as national categories. In South Africa, a country that increasingly secures its reputation as a place of violent crime, where rape statistics are among the highest in the world, and where domestic abuse and family violence, child rape, and the abandonment of families by men/fathers is almost commonplace, research into the cultural dynamics within which kin and gendered identity is constructed and played out is urgently required. Moreover, these categories are also stratified in terms of race and class. Hunter (2004) notes that a prominent stereotype is that African men impregnate women and subsequently deny paternity. He also states that the role of fatherhood is affected not simply by men's power but also from their disempowerment in certain spheres, including the economic. Stereotyping men/fathers as irresponsible abandoners, and "male power as fixed and unified, is too simplistic to explain this" (Hunter 2004:2).

Understanding the symbolic value of men/fathers as providers, particularly in terms of differential access to resources based on race and class is, therefore, relevant in this context. Providing is one symbol, albeit an important one of manhood/fatherhood. There are others, and the proof of manhood/fatherhood may also involve performances of aggression and physical violence towards women and children, infidelity, abandonment of families, and so forth. In a society that is increasingly oriented to market-driven desires, and where providing is a significant part of the network of symbols that regulates the definition of a real man, the value of men who are unemployed, as well of those who are able to provide, has the potential to be interpreted along a continuum of commodification. Providing, although crucial to being good at being a man may not, therefore, always guarantee it. Refusing to share domestic tasks, or drinking regularly on "boys' night out" (Informants: Nilesh and Sivan Reddy) may not then be about the universal domination of men over women per se. It may also be about reconstituting the emasculated self by seeking, at some level, to fit into the terms of reference that is culturally attributed to the value of men. It may thus be interpreted

as rescuing the self from destruction through a necessary positioning on the continuum of self and worth.

Indian men/fathers stereotyped as subject to a collective kin ethic, and the Indian family stereotyped as cohesive, and with relatively low rates of divorce prevails. This is often linked to ideas of fixed authority structures where men/fathers are patriarchs and women/mothers are nurturers. Freund's (1991) work on gender politics in the Indian family is argued in similar vein. In his paper on Indian women and the changing character of the Indian household in Natal, he quotes a student who says that the family institution "keeps women in a double-bind situation, because the family not only exploits and oppresses; it is also through the family that women can expect support and protection" (1991). Meer writes, "Women's subordination occurs in the first instance in the family. It is there that the patriarch exercises his authority. …" (1991:16). Such contradictions create little room to manoeuvre in terms of understanding situated contexts and in trying to consider kin identity, whether racial or gendered, as relational rather than fixed opposites of Us and Them. Weber (1968), for instance states that in the case of patriarchal domination, obedience to the master's authority is based on a "strictly personal loyalty." This obedience is guaranteed insofar as the master's authority is sanctified by tradition. It is this sense of "inviolability" that legitimates the master's position in the hierarchy. This case study attempts to deconstruct the identity of man/father as patriarch in relation to specific meanings of kinship and gender. Within this context, the idea of the reinvention of tradition is also significant. I try to show that there is more than one way that the patriarch is performed, and that a "strictly personal loyalty" may have many meanings and that it may be negotiated in many ways. The ways in which men/fathers mediate the symbols of identity, especially providing and the genetic and social elements of kinship constitutes the key focus in this regard. Man's/father's skill as a symbolic medium is thus instrumental in how he is positioned on the continuum of self and worth. Shifts in states of power as well as powerlessness, is thus implied. The data suggests, therefore, that the seamless transference of general concepts and fixed meanings across time and space is insufficient to accommodate, and attempt to understand, specific identities in specific contexts. It is therefore important to explore the ways in which social structure creates, and opens up, the boundaries of

kinship and gender and the ways in which such boundaries impact on the cultural value assigned to the symbols and the performances of identity.

Smit's work on the changing role of the husband/father in the dual-earner family in South Africa is a case in point. She argues that men's roles have shifted from being sole breadwinner to a more "active nurturant father and partner" and there is thus "movement away from the male-dominant authority pattern to a state of affairs where the husband is still seen as head of the household but with his wife as junior partner…" (2006:402). In this scenario, the inference is that roles of nurturance and economic provider do not work well together and that man/father seems enabled to express his nurturance when his role as economic provider is reduced, or when woman/mother is less able to provide this service. In Smit's study, then, apparent variations to social roles are still premised on a number of assumptions about gender and power, dominance and divisions of labour, and men and women remain locked into separate and bounded cultural spheres. My data suggests that these assumptions are much too general and that shifts in household authority are not so much dependent on a mother suddenly earning income, or a father's ability to nurture. Instead, the focus should be on how earning income, and nurturing, is valued in relation to the particular symbols of identity that enable women/mothers and men/fathers to be good at being women/mothers and men/fathers, respectively.

The social and political landscape has changed, the Group Areas Act is no longer, black economic empowerment policies and quota systems see women increasingly being incorporated into the workplace, the dual income family is increasingly prevalent, as is the woman and child headed household, urbanization and the rise of local and global economic hubs have seen shifts in family composition and household structure, and gender legislation that covers domestic violence against women, sexual harassment, rights to inheritance by common-law wives, the right of families and children to financial support and maintenance by fathers, has also made an impact. Yet, identity stereotypes persist. Chatsworth remains an Indian enclave and Singh's (1996) work on Indians in Phoenix, Durban, despite focusing on historical and contemporary circumstances to account for the persistence of household structure that exhibit the

character of the joint Indian family, continues to typecast the Indian family as a joint family with an "ethic of collective responsibility…" Indians, he says, have continued to find ways, despite financial constraints, to assert their collective ethic through a pronounced sense of kinship responsibility.

In this instance, the ethic of collective responsibility is put forward as a key, and underlying, symbol of Indian family identity. It is not represented as something produced by social structure in the first instance, but rather as something that policy changes sought to thwart and which had to be reconstituted via a reinterpretation of racist legislation. Singh, then, does not consider the ways in which identity boundaries may be contested from within, the product of such contest itself a thing of power which may seem to re-inscribe the very boundaries it sets out to challenge, albeit in time and space. Instead, his starting point is the reassertion of inter-cultural boundaries and the highlighting of confrontation between them. In many ways, my research is about trying to gain insight into the construction of cultural boundaries and the shifts in and across them. Although, this research is based on a particular Indian family in Chatsworth, Durban, I suggest that the arguments lend themselves to broader contexts. Conceiving of manhood/fatherhood as a value that is transacted in a network of exchange suggests that the identities of men/fathers are neither fixed, nor constructed within a single context. Value varies in time and space, and performing the provider does not guarantee a man/father a constant place on the continuum of self and worth. The intersection of identity with ideas of space facilitates this analysis.

Spiegel's work (1996) on domestic fluidity among African households in greater Cape Town is also interesting since it affords a critical assessment of the validity of conventional meanings of concepts such as family and household, suggesting that policy discourse needs to re-examine assumptions based on typical or generic models of household structure and domestic dynamics. Notably, the article provides an overview of various conceptualisations of the household from the time of early anthropology, including the influence of Malinowski (Simpson 2006, Edwards 2004) for whom the nuclear family unit was taken as the universal norm. Spiegel importantly goes on to say that although variations to this conceptualisation have been recognized, taking into

account migrant labour for example, where households were viewed as being "in flux" or stretched across space", he notes that these variations continued to rally around an old theme. Here, then, households were still contained within fixed boundaries - as domestic units, their stability usually defined by the presence of women and children subsisting on remittances and waiting for their absentee members to return to their fixed home to complete the unit. In this sense then, normative social structures, of which the household/family was a relatively stable and cohesive part, prevailed. The data I have gathered, allows me to re-examine these typical and generic models of family structure and dynamics that Spiegel (1996) raises, and to therefore question some of the conventional meanings of kinship and kin identity. The meanings of consanguinity and 'made kinship' are relevant here and this case study pays particular attention to how these meanings are constructed and mediated such that informants become valued as kin. A priori, the yard, in many ways, represents the typologies of kinship, race and gender that Singh (1996) and Smit (2006) allude to, respectively. However, interpretations of incest, and the complex dynamics and meanings of consanguinity and social relations which form central themes in the yard, suggest that it is the engagement, rather than the divisions, among discursive structures of scale that influence constructions of type. Its relevance lies, for instance, in pinpointing the arbitrary boundaries within which meanings of kinship, gender, race and class are constructed, and to ask how such multicultural variability is housed within discourses of the 'typical' or 'normal' South African family. Of particular interest is the cultural value relating to incest and the disjuncture between legal interpretations of a universal law, and practice.

The politics of sameness and difference and the politics of belonging and marginality, like many diasporic communities, is something that many South African Indians struggle with. In this case study, I attempt to show how ideas of kinship, gender, race, and class are interwoven to construct identities that are positioned on a continuum of self and worth in relation to a particular ideological space, in this instance, the yard. Gender, race, class and kinship are huge themes on their own, and it is not the aim of this study to interrogate each. However, the identity of man/father is inextricably bound up with these, insofar as the yard represents a map of meanings pertaining to such themes. It is in this context that man's/father's quest for identity and value is explored.

The yard, representing a microcosm of the cultural diversity for which South Africa is renowned, suggests, therefore, that there is far more to the multiculturalism that Appiah (1997) posits. Sameness and difference is not demarcated neatly by inter-cultural boundaries, or intra-cultural homogeneity, and even though these boundaries may continue to manifest, especially in terms of apartheid mapping, its meanings may have shifted (Sharp 1997).

In South Africa's social and political climate where change is afoot, the difficult question is whether dissolution of the self comes from shutting down the border gates and protecting sameness, or opening them up and letting in difference. The point here is that it is important to take cognisance of identity as fluid – as expression of links between continuity and change. On the one hand it seems ludicrous that the labels and categories that were anathema in anti-apartheid discourse has been resurrected by those who, in a post apartheid state, are assumed to be liberated from it. Assertions of identity within cultural stereotypes should not therefore be glossed over as politically incorrect. Rather, the possibility that cultural boundaries drawn with the same stencil, yet with different meanings and motivation, should be considered. Why bother to find the Other if the Other wants to be found only in some circumstances and not in others, or if anthropologists want to find only certain Others? In this regard, Coplan quotes David Scott:

"…for whom is culture unbounded – the anthropologist or the native? Is it in other words, for (western) theory or for the (local) discourse with which theory is endeavouring to engage…?" (1998:138).

Further, by liberating culture from its boundaries are we not merely exchanging one set of fixed ideas for another? As Coplan (1998:139) says, if the idea of anthropological subjects as autonomous social actors is to be realized, then their identification with cultural boundaries should be taken seriously.

Chapter 2: The yard

The boundary walls of yard architecture cement the spatial divide, both physical and symbolic, between outside and inside. They come to signify the marking of territory, and hence of social and economic space and status. As such the yard boundaries construct a site of Othering - a defence against the outside and a protection of the inside. In this context it becomes necessary to question what is conceived of as inside and what as outside, just as it becomes necessary to ask who comprises Us and who comprises Them. Broached as oppositions, it is easy to see how cultural particularity is counterpoised to cultural difference/generification.[9] Drawing from Sax's (Sax 1998) critique of Said's Orientalism, it also becomes easy to see how the production of oppositions, or of difference, produce social hierarchies. In this context, the yard acts as a useful analytical tool since in ideological terms it can manifest as a measure of family particularity as well as a measure of difference, depending on how its boundaries are drawn. As such, it becomes a site of boundaries and of potential boundary crossings. Thornton (2000) notes that conventional notions of geography and identity do not apply to the conceptualisation of landscapes in South Africa. Geertz (Thornton 2000: 142), for example, says that the world's political landscape is divided into bounded spaces that are disjunct (no spot can belong to two), categorical (either belongs or does not), exhaustive (all spots belong) and uninterrupted. This, Thornton (2000) says is not applicable in contexts where belonging depends on how space is imagined. Here, belonging to spaces of sameness as well as of difference is indeed possible, as is the possibility that the cartography that demarcates the boundaries of sameness may be re-imagined as difference. This counters Appiah's (1997) perspective of cultural difference as confined to homogenous categories. I argue, therefore, that the identities of the men and fathers of the yard become fashioned in bounded spaces, as well as on the cusp of connections - part of a process rather than part of a type.

While I draw from a range of theories, the framework that holds this argument together is based on Edward Sax's (1998) discussion on what he terms: "the dialectics of sameness and difference." Essentially, he argues that the self and the Other reflect one another in a Hall of Mirrors. In this case study, the yard therefore comes to represent an

island unto itself as well as a continuum of connection on which self and Other, inside and outside, and material and symbolic, are positioned and re-positioned. In this way the yard creates surplus meanings that may enable it to exceed, though not necessarily escape, its boundaries.

Bachelard (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995) states for instance that the "space of the house is inhabited not just in daily life but also in the imagination." The yard therefore becomes a metaphor of connection, weaving together ideas of belonging and marginality, of inside and outside, of self and Other, of tradition and the modern, and of the material and the symbolic. In this way the family business, while outside the yard, is still a representation of the material wealth of the family. Insight into the symbolic value of the yard and the identities it engages with is therefore important. In this respect, I draw on recent writings that focus on houses to draw analogies between the yard and the body. The yard body, like the corporeal body, is commonly conceived of as lacking heart, spirit or soul - empty shells unless they are engaged in webs of signification. Sivan, for example, says: "Why do I go to the gym, because I want to look good." He also says: "You can make money but what is the value of money if you don't have a family." The connections between people and things are, therefore, important. It is these connections that enable the yard to manifest as cultural geography. It is thus a process that links the material domain with the symbolic domain, a view that resonates with Levi-Strauss's definition of the house as "a corporate body holding an estate made up of both material and immaterial wealth … (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995:49). The yard then, at once a mercurial and bounded space, is instrumental in constructing the identities of Sivan and Jithen, the men who lay claim to the yard.

The yard's sameness as a measure of its difference

The family as mapped onto the yard is a bewildering tangle of pathways, leading in various combinations towards, and away from, the idioms of kinship. To facilitate analysis of something that is quite unwieldy, the family is considered in two ways, namely as a site of particularity or sameness and as a site of sameness *and* difference. This ties in with Carsten and Hugh-Jones (1995: 12) view that the house is a representation of unity as well as of division and hierarchy. Firstly then, the yard is

considered as a bounded network of kin exchange, fortified by its boundaries against the potentially invasive outside. It thus prioritises cultural sameness. Thus conceived of, the yard comes to signify a clearer delineation between inside and outside. In this context, the construction of family identity is almost site specific, a symbol of closed ranks. Here, the bounded yard body gives birth to a particular sense of self and worth. It is for instance strongly gendered in the sense that it is owned by a male sibling set and represents their patrilineage. For the men of this yard, kinship is also central, and the self is identified in kin terms such as father, brother, son and/or husband. Kin ties therefore constitute a claim of belonging to the yard. However, the ties of blood, seek actualisation through a series of performances. In this process the ideological boundaries inscribed by the yard intersect with meanings of kinship and of gender to construct identity. For Sivan and Jithen, these meanings are expressed by performing the role of provider. It is through the successful performance of this role that he becomes "king of the jungle" (Sivan Reddy), or good at being a man/ father. In other words, neither consanguinity, nor gender, nor the symbolic power of the yard is, on its own, a sufficient measure of manhood/fatherhood.

The yard as representative of a class boundary

Sivan, together with his mother and siblings moved from Clairwood to Silverglen in the late 1960s. There is very little data pertaining to the settlement of Indians in Clairwood, but oral history gleaned through casual conversations with people, including my father, whose family once lived there indicates that a number of Indians whose contracts as indentured labourers had expired were able to buy small plots of land in Clairwood and settle there. They engaged in small-scale farming, and many, like Sivan's father, made their living by hawking fruit and vegetables, and setting up small businesses. With time, the area developed and became home to a bustling and thriving community with houses and shops, and fruit and vegetable markets and schools. Informants have said, for example that "Clairwood had a real sense of community. Life was hard but people knew one another and helped in whatever way they could." The area was structured as a maze of streets, and families lived mainly in houses constructed from wood and iron. Many streets were named after prominent families or families that had lived in Clairwood for a long time. Sigamoney Road, named after my paternal ancestors is an

example of this. These names have been retained despite the Group Areas Act of 1950, the impact of forced removals and other social and political upheaval. Sivan's family lived in Horseshoe Road where his father succeeded in building what Sivan describes as a "beautiful big house … in front of a shebeen." However, the concentration of Indians in Clairwood, an area in close proximity to the metropolitan center of Durban, was frowned upon by Apartheid engineers, as was the fact that as farmers and entrepreneurs they had begun competing favourably with White farmers. This, Singh (1996: 100) notes, led to White traders going out of business and policies being subsequently introduced to curb the economic and social life of Indians. At this time, Indians who had settled in South Africa, were still considered as "strangers" and as "foreign and outlandish"[10] and were not recognized as citizens.

The Group Areas Act of 1950 was one of the harsher measures designed to displace and erode established communities, destroy their businesses and occupations and their ability to support their families. Clairwood was declared a White area and Sivan's family, along with many others, were forced off their property. During the build up to this, Sivan's father died and Jithen and Sivan, then eight and four years-old, respectively, sold peanuts that Uma had roasted in her coal stove to the clients of the shebeen that was located in front of their house. This, Sivan notes, helped to support the family. Indians who were removed from Clairwood were now placed in areas set aside for Indians only, such as Riverside, Prospect Hall and Sea Cow Lake.[11] Planning for Indian housing became evident in the structuring of Indian townships such as Chatsworth, designed with small council houses that could not accommodate extended families. Land was not available to Indians and neither was the option to build houses that catered for their needs, including the size of their families. This was relaxed to some extent when Umhlatuzana, Silverglen and Redhill were advertised in local papers as exclusive Indian suburbs.[12] It was here that those who had managed to save some money were able to buy plots of ground and build their own houses. Sivan, for example, remembers that just before his father died he had bought land in Silverglen for nine hundred pounds. "He didn't believe in insurance and did everything cash. He saved his twelve thousand rands and after he died my mum was able to build a house with that," he says. This is the house that Uma, together with Jithen, Gita and their youngest son,

Praveen, still live in. It was the beginning of the yard, a space that distinguished the Reddys from the underclasses and the council houses of Chatsworth.

Carsten and Hugh-Jones (1995: 3-4), make an interesting point when they say that the houses and the places that people inhabit are taken for granted because like our bodies they are commonplace. They are given significance, therefore, in unusual circumstances such as moving house, fires, etc. Being forcibly removed from a "beautiful big house," and being in effect forced to rebuild lives and heritage, qualifies perhaps not as an unusual circumstance during the Apartheid era. For the families and people who experienced it, however, it nonetheless stands out as something memorable and life-changing. Within this context, it would not be farfetched to assume that the yard represents a process of rebuilding and rebirth, and that its boundaries help to safeguard it from places of deprivation and indignity. I suggest that the control and ownership of the family business, Sage, insofar as it is integrated within the ideological space of the yard, facilitates this distinction between members of the yard and their less fortunate others. Here, material and symbolic resources connect to construct a yard that, as a corporation, is invested with a particular kind of value.

The architecture of the bounded yard therefore becomes a symbol of social transformation and asserts a sense of Us also within a class context. As such it may be seen as a representation of wider social and economic disparities. Silverglen and Umhlatuzana, for instance, sit on the fringes of Chatsworth, the boundaries between them almost seamless to the outsider. The larger and well maintained houses and properties behind their high walls and fences are separated on one side of a narrow street from the smaller semi-detached houses crammed almost on top of one another on the other side of the street. To residents such as Sayah, her friends and their families, Silverglen, Chatsworth, and Umhlatuzana, form an Indian community, to which they belong. However, specific areas, streets within those areas and houses within those streets, constitute indicators of class and the social standing of the families that live there. The yard is situated in one of the rich streets, the houses on it competing favourably with the size and architectural detail of neighbouring properties; the different class status of its occupants reflected in the built environment. I draw on Carsten and

Hugh-Jones (1995) analogy between houses and bodies to suggest that similar to the skin that protects the body, and the clothes that protect the skin, the boundary walls of the yard may be conceived of as a barrier against external contamination. As such it represents another protective layer that is worn by the body. The men/fathers of the yard can therefore claim the yard, which includes its houses and the business, as symbols of their achievements and progress. It acts perhaps as a marker that can be used to juxtapose their success as businessmen with their days as sellers of peanuts for one cent a packet outside a Clairwood shebeen, and their days of displacement. It also marks their skill in terms of being good at being men/fathers, statuses achieved despite social, political and economic upheaval and strife. The yard, in this sense, becomes symbolic of the skill with which a period of transition was managed.

Their lifestyles are now removed from those of the people in the low cost houses on the nearby street, people who have "been left behind by progress," and are "struggling to make ends meet," as Sivan says. However, while this scenario no longer describes the lives of my informants, it is one that nevertheless lurks in the history of the yard. In terms of ideas of self and worth it is, therefore, part of the discourse that helps to construct a hierarchy between the past and the present, and between tradition and progress. The ways in which the traditions of the yard can be selectively invoked to construct difference between Us and Them is therefore significant. The attachment between people and their symbolic resources, especially with respect to how such an attachment constructs a lexicon of cultural particularity, and hence the value of Us within the bounds of that lexicon, is significant. The fact that the value of Us translates as anti-commodity does not, however, mean that those who comprise Us do not within the context of wider discursive structures, have a class identity. Rather, class, like anti-commodity status, becomes another means by which to differentiate Us from Them.

Part of this process of differentiation includes, therefore, disparities based on material wealth. This does not imply that aspects of ideological sameness do not mediate this difference, and that those who are not as rich as Sivan's family, for example, have no interest in houses and yards. Women, regardless of the size and grandeur of their homes spend considerable amounts of time cleaning their houses, men dedicate entire

Saturdays to tending their gardens, however small, and hosing down the pavement in front of their houses. On both sides of the street ideas about what constitutes acceptable décor are similar. Based on visits to a number of these homes in the area, these include high gloss tiles, artificial flowers, and prominent use of the colour red, heavy drapery and elaborate satin bed coverings. The focus on houses and on what these particular spaces represent is therefore homogenizing to some extent, and Sayah, Gita, and many of the other women in the area with who I have interacted, have noted that houses are very important to the Indian community, and that clean houses reflect the status of women, not in isolation, but as women, wives, daughters, mothers, sisters, of their particular house. However, the yard with its elaborations of double-story, double garage, the Mercedes Benz and BMW parked in the driveway, gates with intercom, security cameras, signs that say: "Trespassers will be prosecuted," and plush décor, also send messages about the status of the occupants and inform the ways in which the prestige of the yard is imagined. In relation to the `commoners,' or the Others, across the road and in the sprawling maze of Chatsworth, the yard is, therefore, representative of a space of difference. In class terms, this difference, however, should be seen in relation to the sameness against which it is measured.

Allowing the past, or these Others, to infiltrate the yard boundaries is almost an act of undoing progress – a violation of the self. Concerns pertaining to the safety of the body and the security of one's personal space bring to mind the numerous gated communities and townhouse developments that clamour for space upon the South African urban residential landscape. Perhaps this kind of analysis of the bounded yard in which symbolic and physical spaces and bodies meet may help to shed some light on what a home's breached security means. While this is beyond the scope of this present study, in the context of Apartheid and vast social and economic disparities, it is, however, worth noting the need to mark and defend social and economic territory and status quos. If a man/father gets his status and respect through acts of reciprocity, then the corollary is that the man the man/father who has nothing of recognized value to give has nothing with which to secure his position on the continuum of self ad worth. He thus becomes Other. The flip side of this is the man/father who has the resources to provide, who wants to provide, but who contests the conditions of sameness under which he must

provide, may also become Othered. Are such people destined to be liminal or can there be a happy medium between being outside and belonging. This begs the question of whether, in the interests of self-preservation, it is possible to cross boundaries without destroying those very boundaries that, in different contexts, are also called upon in the interests of self-preservation.

In this context, the physical structure of the yard also informs and constrains the activities and identities of those who are connected with it, especially in terms of being good at. The meanings of kinship, gender, the body, and economic and political interests are thus transacted within the yard's network of exchange, the performances of each interconnected with the others. For Sivan, or Sayah, for that matter, to hold position on the continuum of self and worth, they must mediate all of the dynamics with which the self engages. It becomes reductive, therefore, to prioritise kinship where kinship is assumed to be contingent on fixed blood relationships, a thing disconnected from economics, gender, and all of the other things that give rise to the discursive structure of the yard. In like vein, it is also reductive to assume that because of this connection, the significance of kinship becomes overshadowed. Exploring the meanings of kinship insofar as they operate as part of wider systems of meaning is thus imperative. Reinforcing this, Waterson (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995:68) notes that shifting spatial boundaries of, for example, houses and yards are often symbolic of some sort of transformation or shift in power. With reference to this, she makes the point that social transformation does not necessarily imply that the significance of kinship is usurped by more complex political and economic structures of organization, and vice versa.

The yard made sense of as a racial body

Sivan, for instance, talks of the break down of the Indian family saying that previously it was Whites and Coloureds that were having affairs and getting divorced. Now, however, he states that divorce is increasing among Durban Indians. "If you go to 33 On the Rocks in Umhlanga[13] on a Friday and Saturday night you will be shocked at the way our Indians, especially the women, are carrying on," he says. The fact that such changes to family structure have inspired feelings of horror and disapproval implies that it is

contrary to Sivan's image of the kin and gendered roles of the Indian family. Dark skinned Indians can never be compared with the "darkie ous," or the "baboons," as Africans are sometimes referred to in the yard, for Africans are seen as dirty, wild, thieving, promiscuous and uncivilised. I have heard many conversations recounting the horror of thieving maids who have sex with many men and are always pregnant, and of African children who can't really be blamed for being wild, dirty and neglected since their labourer fathers waste their wages on crime and vice instead of providing for their children. A commonly heard phrase is: "You can take them out of the bush but you can't take the bush out of them." In the yard conceptions of space in relation to identity is thus tied to conceptions of the realm inhabited by the Other.

The bush, as Thornton (2000) notes, invokes the wild, a sinister arcane place of chaos and disorder. In this context the yard shares African interpretations of the bush as uncivilized and distinct from the space of the home. However, the yard's interpretation is also at odds with African cosmology since the bush is seen as representative of the space of the African and is used interchangeably with the 'farm,' a reference to rural areas or the previous homelands with which Africans are associated. The maps of Apartheid continue, therefore, to engineer interpretations of space, land, and racial and cultural difference. It is reflected in the way in which the boundary of the yard body with its well-groomed gardens and its well-dressed people is a world apart from the dirty, wild and immoral bodies of the bush. The meanings that construct the difference of the racial Other are, therefore, also implicated in constructing the sameness of the yard. It is interesting that in this ambiguous space, the cohesive image of the kin co-operative, or yard body is thus reinforced and maintained. This suggests once again that sameness is not born from a continuous and uninterrupted lineage of meaning; that it is as much a process of negotiation as difference.

For example, in the kin network of exchange, Sayah's and Gita's light skin colour is a symbolic resource that is subject to the discursive network of the yard. The extent to which this resource signifies beauty and to which it can be traded as value is therefore part of a process. It is as if the prestigious boundary of Sayah's skin, as it were, reflects the body boundary of the yard, and is in turn caught up in its reflection. Similarly, those who are black skinned women, or those who are men, must invest in light skins not as

the embodiment of it, but rather as mediators of the various symbols of identity within the kin network of exchange. In this context, according Sayah value is tantamount to becoming subject to an aspect of the yard's lexicon, and performing allegiance to one of its traditions. It therefore becomes a means by which to perform and negotiate one's *own* value and identity. On the one hand, it seems crazy that skin colour that once fixed identities within the black and white matrix of Apartheid, continues to be geared towards asserting cultural particularity and cultural value. Yet, the possibility that it is redirected as both a response and a challenge to attempts to construct a national identity also poses an interesting dynamic.

Chapter 3: Performing the provider

In this context, a man's material wealth is a sign of what he can offer his family. Here then, the family business as the site at which family wealth, rather than individual wealth, is accumulated, is fully incorporated into the yard. It operates on the principle of 'by the family for the family' such that exchanges of value within this closed network are fortified by notions of the familiar and by invocations of family tradition. For instance, two houses owned by two brothers/ fathers, are enclosed within the yard. Among them a tradition of brotherhood, and of family, must prevail. It is a tradition they perform in various ways and which they acknowledge as peculiar to the men of their family. Sivan, for example, frequently distinguishes between the men in his family and other men. He says: "the men in our family say to ourselves that we have to be the provider," and he says that "every man" who is separated from his wife is reluctant to provide for her but that, "in the Reddy family we think differently." He also alludes to the power of the closed kin network, saying that he loves his mother and his wife equally, but with different types of love. Sayah, like Gita, wanted him and Jithen to choose between Uma and themselves. He says that there is no choice in family because he would help the one who was most in danger of drowning first. This way of thinking, he says, "is embedded in us. I have been exposed to many people and businesses, but Jithen thinks the same as me, so how can it come from outside. It comes from the teachings of my mother, from my family."

Providing as a symbol of being good at being a man/father

Since the brothers are also fathers, their brotherhood must, however, coexist with the tradition of providing. The reward for performing this tradition well is the recognition of rank as king of the jungle. Although both *fathers* have attained performance excellence, only one *brother* is, nonetheless, acknowledged as king of the jungle. In this yard, however, there can be no overt contest for this title since the tradition of brotherhood and family does not accommodate it. The yard then is a family corporation, setting the parameters of Us and Othering those who would thwart its traditions. In other words, it regulates the attachment between the symbolic resources of a particular family and those kin who, through performance, reinforce the value of those resources

and, by extension, the value of themselves. Insofar as Sage becomes part of the yard's ideological landscape onto which traditions of providing, brotherhood, and family cohesion are mapped, it also represents ideas of continuity, a way in which legacies of shared codes of meaning, together with material wealth, can reinforce the image of family as unbroken.

In this particular family, however, many of the members have ambiguous roles and kin identities. For example, my key informant and his biological brother also share the social relationship of son and father. Incest, which I elaborate on in chapter five, and the adoption of a brother's daughter by the other brother compound the idea that kinship in this yard space circulates in a closed and tightly knit network of exchange. Here, I explore meanings of incest, consanguinity and family in relation to varying interpretations of what the integrity of the family stands for. Simpson's (2006) notions of how contraventions of kinship law, which appears to scramble kinship yet at once unscrambles it, is discussed. It helps to illustrate that the yard's lexicon of kinship is part of a negotiated process, its language and its traditions of sameness as complex as the meanings of blood and performance on which it is premised.

In this scenario of sameness, the Malinowskian model of family as a bounded social unit occupying a particular physical space in which to raise children and characterized by specific emotional bonds is seemingly fore-grounded (Moore 1988:32). Here, kinship as an ideal language is prioritised and providers are not expected to experience themselves, or their families, as commodities. After all, as fathers, their engagement in production, outside the domestic sphere, is as natural as mothers' reproduction and consequent confinement within the domestic sphere. Supporting this idea, Sivan says that the men in his family have to be providers because they believe that the man is always king of the jungle. He states: "Let's face reality here, women have their own strengths. If you say to a man go take care of the baby and the kitchen I don't think he'll do a better job than a woman. But in terms of providing the man will always come out tops, not only in a financial sense but also in a physical sense" (March 2006).

Similarly, within this idiom of kinship, brothers cannot conceive of themselves as competitors. Their subjectivities and worth are in a sense *subject to* the yard and hence

to the particular structures and traditions of family that it represents. The family as consumers of wealth, or as clients of the provider, must therefore be reconceptualised. I argue, therefore, that in the ideological space of sameness, the family is engaged in a process that transforms a provider's material resources into his prestige, or anti-commodity status as good at being a man/father. Instead of the receipt of cars, clothing and monthly allowances becoming acts of consumption, they become redeemed through acts of reciprocity. In other words, providers receive respect, loyalty and other sentiment that alludes to the bonds of family *and* the bonds between family and their particular symbolic resources. Within the closed network of kin exchange, these are appropriate values with which children and wives are able to negotiate. Rendered visible through performance, these values do not denature the status quo and the structure of the yard. For the relationship between men/fathers and their families to work in this bounded yard space therefore implies equivalence between the values that are being exchanged; providing material goods in exchange for love and loyalty, for example. During this process specific identities of father and of family are thus constructed, acknowledged and claimed. It is a process that acts as a check on discord and serious challenge to the persuasiveness of the family ideal. In its insular form, the yard therefore wraps itself around those that inhabit it. Based on idioms of kinship where rights and obligations come to be naturalized, the yard is a site that commands. Based on similar idioms of kinship, the yard is also a site that rewards or disparages performance. It is therefore a space that regulates status and structures hierarchies of identity, suggesting that the closer one is able to get to the core, the less marginal one becomes.

The imagery of the space around the core is a series of concentric circles merging into one another. It reinforces a space of sameness, a circular network that is almost incestuous in its exchanges of value. The provider's ideas of self and worth are thus constructed within the confined and very particular space of the insider. It is in this space that the yard acts as a trope for belonging, inclusion and family cohesion.

Similarly, the bodies of the people of the yard take on this guise such that their body boundary protects value. The yard's brand of sameness is reinforced by its men for whom providing, as Sivan notes, has been "engrained into the bodies" of himself and

his brother. It is also reinforced by, for example, its women whose body boundaries become beautiful, pure and desirable, in conjunction with how they perform being good at being yard women. In the kin network of exchange a woman's beauty means having a light skin colour, being adorned with jewellery, cosmetics and designer clothing. It also means being a good cook, keeping the house clean, accepting the fact that one's husband has a mistress, and not questioning a husband's whereabouts. Using Uma's phrase, being a woman in the yard means to: "stick and stay." In the yard, for example, it is common knowledge that Jithen has had a mistress for many years. Gita has resigned herself to this and says that she has nowhere else to go and that for the sake of the children she has to stick and stay. Performing these meanings for value is about performing one's place in the yard. In so doing, it marks out the places of men/fathers and other kin without threatening those places. As such, the prestige of the yard and of its providers, are performed, and the yard becomes a space in which rank differences are naturalized. This naturalizing, I suggest, is part of the yard's lexicon of sameness, transacted within its network of exchange. As such, I think it reinterprets and recreates the language of kinship, perhaps as variations on themes that do not presume the meanings of kinship and identity. This perspective differs slightly from Levi-Strauss's (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995: 10) claim that this kind of naturalizing of rank necessarily "subverts" the language of kinship.

The metaphorical links between the body and the yard is likened to an "extra skin, carapace, or second layer of clothes" (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995: 2), extensions of each other. The beauty of the body, and of the clothes and adornments worn on its boundary does not, therefore, necessarily represent an index of the wealth and status of the provider as opposed to the wearer (Fishburn 1982). Here, I argue that benefit is derived and value is exchanged through association between provider and wearer, for example. It is within this context that the body acts as a site of ritual transformation where commodities such as clothes can be re-imagined and made meaningful. In like vein, the body of the provider is also not just a commodified body, a thing that can stand completely apart from the sameness of the collective yard body. The yard body consumes the provider but it also has the capacity give back things that reconstitute the provider. This process depends, however, on associations between specific symbols of identity and the specific people who interpret and perform them, since it is within the

closed network of exchange that like shared codes of meaning can regulate the preservation of status quos. Here, however, the provider has to tread carefully so that the benefit he derives takes precedence over what could become a carceral network (Foucault in Butler 1997). In this context, the bodies here are not free bodies, the value of which may be prostituted on the open market. In this context, the answer to Carsten and Hugh-Jones (1995), question of whether a house naturalises hierarchies of gender or does gender naturalise social ranking of which the house is a central component, is, as they later state, linked to a series of connections between the house, or in my case study, the yard, and its people.

Mapping the yard's meanings of kinship onto the bodies of its providers

Jithen, as the elder brother, is considered head of the extended family. He is thought of as the 'big father' and is referred to as 'big daddy' by Sivan's children. In turn, Sivan is thought of as 'small father' and is referred to as 'small daddy' by Jithen's children. Both fathers have rights over all the children, and confer on decisions regarding their wives and children. In this yard, rank differences based on age, gender and other cultural meanings manifest as natural. This naturalization is, I suggest, part of the regulatory mechanism that curbs contest. Sivan, for instance, states that although he sometimes disagrees with Jithen, he has to either accept his decision as final, or find non-disruptive ways to circumvent his authority. This is because, apart from their relatedness as brothers, Sivan also relates to Jithen as his father. This, as discussed previously, is attributed to the fact that Jithen, as the eldest son at nine years of age, assumed the role of family provider. He began by selling peanuts outside shebeens after school, and by buying plastic toys and selling them at a profit to White children along Durban's racially segregated beachfront. It is a role that Sivan, Jithen, and their families regard as synonymous with the role of the father. In this regard, Sivan almost seems to invoke a particular cosmology pertaining to men in relation to their kin, saying, for example:

> My father always said as long as he lives, as long as his spirit lives around us, we must never ever knock on anyone else's door for a plate of food … for anything. That has been engrained into our bodies, myself and my brother. The same thing we carry forward to our kids … they must not knock on someone else's door. They must be well provided for. …My driving force, of my success and of my business, is to be a

provider. The men in my family say to ourselves that we have to be the provider (Sivan Reddy Excerpt from interview: March 2006).

In this context, a core meaning of father is that of provider. However, it is also seems to signify identification with a 'brotherhood' of men – men, who because of their roles, or potential roles, as providers share a code of understanding and are able to sympathise with, or congratulate, one another respectively about the anxieties or successes of performance. I suggest further that in the context of this research, it is also a forum for the grooming and initiation of younger male kin, such as sons and nephews, into the arts of providing. In the yard then, the men and boys, or the "bossas" and the "lanis," as they often refer to each other earn the respect of women and men by either performing the role of provider for their families, or by learning about it from those who are marked as successful providers. Here, Friday nights are ritually observed as "boys' night," where Nilesh and Jithen's two sons, Naveen and Praveen, gather in the basement of Jithen's house to play cards. Over the last year this happens more with Jithen than with Sivan who although a frequent presence, no longer lives in the yard. Alternatively, the boys follow the example set by their fathers and go out, usually to nightclubs and bars. Being a provider, or future provider, it seems, requires marking out the boundaries of men/fathers/husbands/providers as a space that does not include kinswomen. In so doing, the boundaries of women may also be constructed, and their kin and gendered identities performed. As Sivan infers, a man who goes out with the boys and comes home late and expects his wife to open the door and welcome him home with a hot plate of food, is being a man, not a mukhu. Correspondingly, the woman who answers the door with a hot plate of food is being a woman, each holding onto a particular position on the continuum of self and worth.

Providing as a means to perform brotherhood

Boys' night out, whether card night or club night, seems to have become a sign of their autonomy, of leaving the house and the women without need for being accountable, without any explanation save that it is boy's night. For instance, Friday nights are nights to dress up. I am at Sayah's house one evening when Nilesh appears. His sisters have had their evening baths and are dressed in pyjamas. He, on the other hand, is wearing white designer jeans, a long sleeved shirt with visible designer label and white Italian

shoes. I ask him: what's the occasion? He smiles and winks, saying that it's Friday night, the boys are going out. Sayah, with something akin to a mixture of pride and long suffering, remarks that her son looks very handsome but that "he's learning too many habits from his father. You must see his father's shoes," she says. Nilesh nods, saying proudly that "the bally[14] is styling with his Hugo Boss" and that he buys his shoes in Brazil. Here then, Nilesh learns that being a successful provider comes with certain symbols of status, and it is almost as though the act of dressing up on a Friday night requires no explanation. The act itself is the message, a silent communication, that he is part of the yard's brotherhood - a man, a brother, a son, and a future father/provider. As an index of his identity, this coincides with the idea that poetic discourse is a "set toward the message … a focus on the message for its own sake" (Jakobson 1960:356; Waugh 1980:58 in Herzfeld 1988:11). It may be argued then, that Nilesh, although not yet king of the jungle understands the performance of sovereignty. In this regard, Herzfeld (1988) states that being *good at* being a man, rather than being a good man, requires performance excellence. This excellence rests on the ability to foreground one's identity through actions that strikingly "speak for themselves" (Herzfeld 1988:16). It is important to note, however, that while the message fore-grounded by Nilesh's performance may speak for itself, it is not divorced from a wider social contexts. This includes the fact that Others, such as Sayah and his sisters, communicate their own messages, tacitly accepting the idea of boys' night out, conveying the message that they recognise that he is learning too many things from his father. Nilesh, for instance grumbles that his girlfriend doesn't want him to go out that night, saying that she wanted to know why she couldn't accompany him. Sayah probes: "what you told her?" she asks. Nilesh answers that he told her that, "if she doesn't like it then she knows what she can do." Sayah responds: "Good you told her. You mustn't act like a mukhu. Just now she'll think she can keep you under her skirt…"

One of the more significant lessons then is what it means to be good at being a man, a lesson that the yard's men and women construct, teach and perpetuate. A man, whose performance of manhood leaves little room for that manhood to be questioned, is a real man, a worthy man. Similarly, a man/father whose performance of providing is measured as excellent is a man/father who commands respect. These are part of the

yard's traditions. As such, they are subject to the ways in which the symbols of identity are interpreted and performed for value within the yard's kin network of exchange. More importantly, perhaps, performing these traditions construct the image of a man/father who is able to hedge the risk of his authority being challenged. Sivan, for example, does not want to be an object of pity, where fathers who are perceived as just making ends meet are identified, by both men and women, as mediocre or worthless men. In this regard, Sivan talks about the powerlessness of Suren, Sayah's sister's unemployed husband, suggesting that he represents a useful yardstick by which being good at being a man/father can be measured. Suren, corroborates Sivan's views when we have a conversation at a later stage, saying: "Ever since I lost my job, I lost my dignity. I have become a passenger in my family. It hurts to know that those closest to you, your own family who you expect support from, can treat you like a nothing" (Suren Pather Excerpt from interview: April 2006).

Chapter 4: Providing as a performance of tradition and change

Providing as a performance of tradition

For Sivan, the image of being a provider is central to who he and Jithen are. As he explains: "It has been engrained into [their] bodies," a Reddy family legacy bequeathed to them by the father, and taught to them by their mother. In this sense, it becomes part of the tradition of the yard, a regulatory symbol of masculine and kin identity as transacted in the kin network of exchange. This is illustrated when Sivan explains that approximately eight years ago he turned down a lucrative job opportunity that required him to relocate. He turned it down because he was "not allowed to leave Durban" by his parents. He had to stay, he says, because of his responsibility to his family, because money without family is meaningless, and because he had to respect his parents, i.e. his mother and Jithen.

Sivan describes the bond of closeness that he shares with Jithen, saying that Jithen is fond of saying that they are "one bean split into two, that if I feel pain, he feels pain, and vice versa." In the yard of sameness this bond is made manifest in ways of relating, of interpreting what being brothers, as well as what being father and son means within a particular idiom of family. In many ways, the common thread that weaves these relationships together is that of being a provider. Sivan, for instance, considers Jithen as his father because Jithen, as eldest son, undertook the responsibility of providing for his family when his father died. Sivan says:

> He would bring every cent …empty his pockets on the bed and walk away. The money goes into my mother's hands…. After that, I also learned to go with him. He taught me. We had to take that responsibility. … In my family Jithen is my father. That is how I take it, because in my family he basically brought me up (Sivan Reddy Excerpt from interview: March 2006).

This father/ son relationship marks Jithen not only as provider to Sivan and the rest of the family, but also as mentor. In this scenario, Jithen is requested to assume responsibility for his family, and his performance, made poignant by his youth and the various hardships he encountered, becomes even more potent. It earns him Sivan's admiration and respect; it also earns him headship status. In this scenario of father and

son, where the prospect of competing interests for head of the family are minimal, especially since the father is performing the provider adequately, it also earns Jithen the title of king of the jungle. While Jithen remains head of the Reddy family, I suggest that the dynamics of this way of relating as father and son has shifted with time. In terms of performing the provider, the gap between Sivan and Jithen has closed. They are both identified as prestigious businessmen and good providers. In other words, Sivan can no longer identify Jithen as his father on the basis that Jithen provides him with financial support, physical protection, or even mentorship. Instead of this tempering the father/son dynamic, Sivan, I suggest, illustrates how the meaning and performance of fatherhood has shifted. He notes, for instance, that Jithen continues to phone him every night to make sure that he has arrived home safely. Adding to this, he states: "He phones me more than I think he phones his own kids because I'm still his baby, you see. Seriously, that's the kind of bond we've got."

I suggest instead that the father/ son relationship that Sivan and Jithen share *now* is a necessary one since it reinforces the 'naturalness' of the rank differences between them. Sivan, after all, has achieved excellence in his performance of providing and yet in the yard, insofar as this ideological space includes Sage, Sivan feels unable to contest Jithen's authority. Jithen, he says, wants to give their children whatever they ask for. For instance, Jithen sanctioned Nivi's request for a car, despite the fact that Sivan held the view that she should work and demonstrate that she was willing to save towards the car before he would consent to help her. Sivan also admits that his son was also "knocking on his door" for a car, and that if he refused to buy it, he knew that Nilesh would go to his big father who would urge him to cede to Nilesh. This, Sivan says, is because "Jithen feels he is the father of the family and he has to provide." It is an attitude based on tradition and it is also an attitude that Sivan understands, and even shares. Yet, he feels that this kind of capitulation to the demands of family is destructive since it neglects to provide children with a work ethic, leading to the mismanagement of family property and the eventual marginalisation of benefactors, particularly in their old age. Jithen's performance of communal providing spills over into his ideas about running the family business. For Jithen, the business is the family. For Sivan, the business helps him to provide for the family but it is "a living organism

on its own." He says that Jithen and he own the money that the business makes but that its structure is like a human being since nobody owns a human being. "We all work for that entity and whoever works best should lead it… Even though we are the owners, it may not be us. … The way I do business is different from the way Jithen does business. I believe in the best man for the job. For Jithen, it is all about the family," he says. There is thus an underlying tension between Sivan and Jithen, although Sivan admits that this can never be fully articulated since Jithen is his father, and as such he must respect his decisions. Jithen's authority and value as father/provider is thus recognized because of the language of his performance – performance made legible, or "inviolable" as Weber (1968:1006) states, because it is also presented in the image of tradition, benevolence and largesse.

Although Sivan has achieved excellence as a provider and in terms of the yard's criteria of evaluation should have the same status as Jithen, this does not occur. This, I posit is due to the fact that the tradition of providing works in combination with other traditions, including hierarchies based on age and social relationships such as father/son. Herzfeld (1988) notes that the quest for performance excellence is about the focus on "I." Geared towards asserting self-regard, or "eghoismos" as Herzfeld (1988), with reference to Aristotle terms it, such excellence would seem to be about marking the self as different in some way from others. In the yard it stands to reason that this would include other providers such as Jithen. Yet, the concentric circles that the yard seems to draw around the identities that inhabit its space, and the incestuousness of its kin network of exchange within which identities of father, son, brother, and provider overlap, seems to act as a check on this difference. This resonates with Foucault's (Butler 1997) idea that the ideal man is the ideal prisoner. Difference thus becomes subject to the yard's lexicon of sameness and the particular idiom of family that it fosters. In this context then, the fact that Sivan is co-owner and manager of the family business, and that he has as much access as Jithen does to the material resources that contribute to excellent performances of providing does not necessarily imply that he has the right to contest what he refers to as "Jithen's place as father of the family." Once again then, the dialectic of sameness and difference is evoked.

This highlights the fact that Sivan's identity and value as provider as transacted within the kin network of exchange may be contingent on how his experiences and meanings of difference are managed. The yard's language of kinship is persuasive precisely because the integrity of the family that it espouses is tied to conflated identities and roles. In this context, it becomes difficult and artificial to try to separate father from son, from brother, and from provider. Given these inter-subjectivities, it also becomes difficult for authority structures within the context of father/son, or elder brother/younger brother to be separated from the dynamics of authority between providers. Being good at being a man thus becomes somehow interwoven with being good at being a father, a brother, a son, and a provider. Imbrications in which roles and identities not only intersect with one another, but also intersect with complex and shifting dynamics of rank, authority and value, is thus apparent. Simpson (2006), notes, for instance a case in England in which a man and his father who have both married the same woman, albeit at different times, renders the identities of fathers and sons interchangeable. This undermines the logic of generations, chronology, and the fixed and distinct identities upon which most kinship systems are ordered. In so doing it "confounds the system of sameness and difference/ connectedness and separateness upon which the cognitive and symbolic construction of kinship relations is widely built" (Simpson 2006:5).

In the landscape of the yard in which Sivan and Jithen, as the embodiment of providers and as kin bodies, meet, and in which they trade and negotiate the symbols of their various identities, how does one distinguish between sameness and difference, except to point to the possibility that each is but a measure of the other. This seems to suggest that the yard of sameness, the identities it constructs as included or marginal, and the image of family as cohesive or fractured that it safeguards, is tied up with how its boundaries shift to accommodate and make sense of difference, change and contest. Even though the identities and social organization of the yard may appear to fit stereotypes of the wealthy Indian family, it thus becomes difficult to slot constructions and performances of kin *cum* gendered identity within the embrace of, "the Indian family ethic of collective responsibility," or the universal domination of women by men, or ideas of fixed distinctions between blood, affinity and social relations.

Providing as a performance of cohesion and contest, of tradition and change

Underlying Sivan's acceptance of Jithen's title, and despite his performance of Small Daddy, I argue, however, that the ideal remains, namely that, "being a provider is everything." It is central to his position on the continuum of self and worth as being good at being a man/father. This idea is reinforced when he says that a man who does not provide cannot be recognized as king of the jungle, and "that a man will rather walk away from the family than lose [his] crown." In the yard Sivan therefore has insufficient space to be evaluated on par, or perhaps even more excellent, than Jithen – he will always be prince. For instance, if father means being unconditional provider, as Jithen is, Sivan can never fully be Nilesh's father, especially if he chooses to limit his acts of giving.

As elaborated upon previously, Sivan does not always agree with Jithen's decisions with respect to Sage, the family business. Jithen, for example, holds fast to his view that the business is the family. As such, Sivan says that Jithen feels that the children are entitled to their shares in the business. Resisted by Sivan, he has nevertheless begun dividing his interests in the business among his children. Despite this, I suggest that it is the strong idiom of family – replete as it is with ideas of close family bonds, of being tightly-knit, of claims to "our own," of brothers standing up for each other, of the father-son relationship and the brother-brother relationship as one bean split into two, and of money is nothing without family – that does not allow Sivan to challenge Jithen's voice of authority in the yard. After all, it is this idiom of family from which he also derives his value. In instances where his interpretation and performance of providing correlate with the yard's lexicon of sameness, continuity between himself and the symbolic resources, or traditions, of the yard, is fostered. As 'good at being a man,' he will perform support for his brother and thus allegiance to the yard's lexicon. Similarly, he will perform 'good at being a son' by, as he says, not complaining to Uma about Jithen and expecting her to take sides.

To perform provider, father, brother, son, prince and king, it would seem, therefore, that Sivan had to leave the yard. I suggest that it is only by leaving that he is able to belong,

but belong on his terms. Depending on what works for him in time and space, the yard can be perceived as either a bounded landscape to which he belongs, or a space of border crossings. Although he no longer lives with them, he is still able to perform the symbols of provider almost in exaggerated fashion such that the statement he makes of being good at being man/father is defiant, desperate and unequivocal. As such, it is a performance that seems to set him apart from providers who live with their families and have a less ambiguous identity. Ironically, however, I suggest that this performance of setting himself apart may also be interpreted as an exaggerated attempt to re-inscribe his subjection to the yard's lexicon of sameness. Giving Sayah, Kalay and Nivi carte blanche in a jewellery store is an example of this. Added to this, he also does not have to play prince in the yard on a routine basis. Ironically, in abstentia, he thus becomes undisputed king of his jungle. I posit that in this context he can also reinterpret his role as brother since the performance as prince can no longer be taken for granted in exactly the same way.

This, I suggest, involves the poetics of Sivan's manhood or, to quote Fernandez (in Herzfeld 1988), his "effective *movement."* It is about "shifting the ordinary and everyday into a context where the very change of context itself serves to invest it with sudden significance" (Herzfeld 1988:16). By leaving, Sivan has, in a sense, redefined his space, perhaps prioritising his claim to belonging, rather than the family's claim to him. In other words, the yard is only his to the extent that he chooses to maintain the connection. He is able to do this by frequently visiting his mother, his brother, and his children, and by inviting them to visit him in a space that is marked as his. His family has an open invitation to his apartment, he says, thereby asserting his connection with them, yet simultaneously asserting his autonomy as King of another jungle. For Sivan to want to maintain his connection to the yard, it must 'almost' be worth his while. In other words, his overtures must be embraced. This shifts Jithen's position since Sivan's occupancy, his tenure in the yard, is not as fixed as it once may have been. The point is that Jithen's position as father of the family also rests on a particular image of family being maintained. Performances of cohesion, brotherhood and mutual support, are thus important. As such, Jithen (the voice of authority/ power) is alerted to the fact that his claim to Sivan, whether as brother or as son, requires the connection to be activated – it

is not just there, naturalized within the lexicon of a particular ideological space. Thus, for example, when Jithen is approached by Sayah for air-conditioning, promising that if he buys it she will pay him back in monthly instalments of one thousand Rand, he sees fit to consult with Sivan instead of unilaterally invoking his power as Big Daddy.

Instead of carving out the yard into yours and mine and to usurp Jithen's throne, I suggest that Sivan's departure has allowed the yard's symbols of kin and gender identity to prevail. The traditions of manhood and fatherhood insofar as they circulate within the kin network of exchange continue to be performed for value, by both Sivan and Jithen. Further, if, as I have argued earlier, providers are an extension of the yard, as is the family business with which they engage, it follows that Sivan may also be conceived of as an extension of the network that he has established outside the boundaries of the yard. In similar vein, the family business also becomes an extension of this network. In this context, Sivan becomes the medium through which the meanings exchanged within the yard's closed kin network and those exchanged in his wider network intersect. The ideological space of difference represented by his penthouse on Durban's north coast and the ways in which it draws in the space of business by facilitating networking opportunities among colleagues and friends is significant here. He talks poignantly about how having his own home has "opened up the world" for him, exposing him to the possibility of having White friends and sleeping in the same bed with a black friend without fear of dirt and contamination. This contrasts with the ideological limits of the yard and he states:

> By leaving the yard I have been able to break my own barriers. By having my own house, I have been able to create a different network. With my work I travel, I met lots of people. Now when friends and colleagues come to Durban they know my house is open to them. Here we can talk any language… (Sivan Reddy Excerpt from interview: March 2006).

This space of difference, therefore, is not different unless measured in relation to the space of sameness. Sivan, after all performs being good at being a man/father from both vantage points. In this context, his regulation in the yard, including his acquiescence to Jithen's authority at Sage, is offset by his access to a wider network and his relative autonomy, including in relation to business dealings. I suggest, therefore, that his identity and performances of man, father, provider, brother, son, and business partner

coalesce at the crossroads of the ideological spaces of sameness and difference. Further, I suggest that the crossroads represents a space in which particular traditions of manhood/fatherhood may be expressed in relation to change. Providing for his family although choosing not to live with them may signal a break from the 'normal,' especially as far as the yard's lexicon for normalcy and tradition is concerned. Yet, Sivan, continues to provide, and to provide well, subject as he is to the yard's, and by extension to his own, symbols of manhood and fatherhood. The inter-subjectivity of roles and identities makes it artificial to suggest that the symbols and performances of his identity are completely regulated by the yard in some contexts and completely autonomous from it in others. Similarly, it is problematic to assume that he performs man/father/provider while bound to a landscape where particularity is easily separated from the wider discourses within which he engages. Sivan, for instance, discusses the book, *Seven Day Weekend,* saying that it illustrates that people are trapped by the boundaries that they create themselves and that the reasons that weekends fall on Saturdays and Sundays are similar to the reasons by which Chatsworth's Indian community would judge him as immoral if he were to have a relationship with a woman who was twenty years his junior. Aware of these dynamics, he nonetheless expresses angst, stating: "I am caught between the traditions of my family and the other world of liberalisation. In many ways I subscribe to those same traditions but at the same time I am also trying to go away from it."

Performing the provider on the cusp of cohesion and contest, and of sameness and difference does not, therefore, detract from its authenticity. This relates to Briggs (1996) idea that tradition, regardless of change, qualifies as authentic as long it has meaning for those who perform it. This links with Errington and Gewurtz (2001) discussion on the generification of culture insofar as the intersection of ideological space between the yard and Sivan's wider network illustrates an engagement of discursive structures. In this way, I suggest that tradition and local discourse, instead of becoming illegitimate or annihilated, is made meaningful and relevant in relation to shifts in context. Thus, when Weber (1968:1006) states that obedience to the authority of a patriarch is based on "a strictly personal loyalty" that is sanctified by the "the belief in the inviolability of that which has existed from time out of mind," it becomes imperative that the discourses of

change and continuity within which tradition is performed and made meaningful is considered.

Contesting the meanings of provider as kin body becomes class body

In a society where money has significant cultural value, a man's/father's access to money and his status as provider would, according to Ortner (1974) and Marxist theorists, infer that he is indeed all powerful. In fact, as provider, he could perhaps be conceived of as money personified. This idea is substantiated by Sivan's assertion that providing has been "engrained onto our bodies." This commodification at the site of the body thus makes him saleable in a market-oriented context. In this context, the family may therefore be conceived of as consumers and in what almost parallels a context of supply and demand a man's self-worth appears commensurate with his ability to deliver the goods, as it were. I speak to Sayah, Kalay and Nivi shortly after New Year 2006. They tell me that they had a quiet New Year's Day and that Sivan had not visited them. Sayah talks about her "poor children" whose father doesn't worry about them. She asks them to tell me what he gave them for Christmas. There is an embarrassed silence. Sayah fills it, saying: "Jeans, one jeans each, that's what he gave them. What kind of man is he, he's stinking rich but he can only give his children things like this." A few days later, a visiting relative teases her, saying: " I hear Sivan is planning to change your car to the new Mercedes SLK." She responds: "I don't know about that but he mustn't think I'm stupid. I know how much he's got. You think my children and I must suffer."

Relating to similar contexts, Sivan, says of his role as provider, "that the family has changed its values, it has become about commodities because the family just wants and wants." In other words, the kin network within which meanings were shared and in which the value of things and people could be ritually transformed into anti-commodities, has altered. In this altered context, where the attachment between family and its traditions begins to unravel, Sivan feels raped and used. This begs the question of whether the value that derives from being able to provide a thing that is desired is sufficient for a man's/father's constructions of self and worth, let alone his power and dominance. After all, this kind of imagery is reserved for the public sphere and not for

the Malinowskian idea that home symbolizes a sanctuary and refuge from the outside (Moore 1988).

Leichty (2005) suggests, the self is constructed in multiple contexts and it is insufficient to conceive of identity as being primarily expressed through its association with things. It is therefore necessary to ask when is the self subject to "the austere monarchy" (Foucault in Curtis 2004:114) of things and when does the self exert agency in relation to things. A continuum of reinvention, on which the material body morphs into the symbolic body (the anti-commodity), and vice versa, is thus implicated in this process of self and worth. Once again, this evokes the tensions, rather than the dichotomy, between sameness and difference. How a man is able to position himself on the continuum of reinvention is contingent on his access to resources, both material and symbolic. How he negotiates the value of such resources such that he is able to perform being good at being a man/father depends on his skill as a symbolic medium. It is this skill that prevents him from sliding off the continuum of self and worth.

These resources can be large houses with high walls and 'keep out' signs, a family who appears well provided for, expensive cars, or ownership of a profitable business. The preservation of these symbols of worth is therefore about the preservation of the self. In this sense, sliding off the continuum is tantamount to colliding with the Other. It represents an abyss of negative values that in the context of this case study is a measure of the poor man, the mukhu, and the man who may never be king of his jungle. Being acknowledged as king of the jungle is extremely important to the men of the yard and to other men such as Sivan and Jithen's brothers-in-law. It is a primary trope for being good at being a man, the value of which intersects with the performance of providing. Substantiating this idea, Sivan discusses Sayah's sister's husband, Suren. Suren turned 50 years old in May this year. He worked for many years at South African breweries, rising through the ranks. At the time of his retrenchment three years ago he was an experienced and respected information technologist. He has been unable to find employment since and has become a builder, doing small-scale renovations in and around Chatsworth whenever he can secure the work. Dashni, his wife, has a secure job

with a prestigious firm of accountants. She refrained from giving me an exact figure, saying that she earned a monthly income of approximately R12 000. Sivan says:

> Suren feels so unrested at the moment and I can see it because I am a man. I feel sorry for him because he was the earning power in the family and now he is not. Basically the attitude is that you don't provide so shut your mouth. For a man who is king of the jungle it's taking his throne away and only giving him the title. He wants his crown…but he just has to accept this abuse. Money is power no matter where you go. You have to hold onto your purse otherwise you lose your crown. I could walk away but my say still has influence because I have the money. There is this expectation that the man's primary role as a man is to provide and if you can't do this you are useless (Sivan Reddy Excerpt from interview: March 2006).

Apart from expressing sympathy for Suren, Sivan is also illustrating a value by which to measure the Other. Sans mukhus, neither he nor Jithen has a scale on which to gauge their own worth. In this sense, Suren, himself commodified, is tantamount to Sivan's and Jithen's class Other. The dialectic of sameness and difference is once again evident in this context. It is interesting to note that the value of a man's kin identity, namely: being good at being a man/father is, also, connected to his ability to Other by class.

Commodifying the yard's traditions by reinterpreting the meanings of food

As alluded to previously, performing the family entails performing the symbols of identity that are constructed and exchanged for value within the yard's kin network. Within this context, being good at being a woman/wife/mother requires performances of domesticity. Cooking for the family is an important component of this. The woman who not only cooks well, but wakes early to cook curries for her family's breakfast, prepares packed lunches and has freshly cooked meals ready for supper, regardless of what time her husband and children arrive home, is thus highly valued. Both Gita, Jithen's wife, and Sayah are renowned as excellent cooks and bakers among friends, family and neighbours. Both women are frequently called upon by extended family to assist with food preparation if a big event such as a wedding or birthday party is to be hosted. At the time of Uma's eightieth birthday party, although Sivan and Jithen had arranged outside catering, Sayah was still called upon to make the marinade for chicken tikka because she says proudly: "nobody makes it like me." This tradition of cooking is,

however, connected to the yard's tradition of women who, as Uma, Gita and Sayah say, are expected to "stick and stay."

This idea of sticking and staying demonstrates a woman's commitment to her family and the symbols of identity that are bound up with it. Sivan reinforces this when he notes, for example, that when a man/father/provider comes home late, including after boys' night, he expects his wife to open the door and have a hot plate of food waiting for him. If she does this, Sivan says that the next time a man goes out he will want to return home at midnight instead of at five in the morning. If she flouts this tradition the man, he says, will think about finding his meal somewhere else. Here, the connection between food and sex is made and it becomes explicit when I speak to Jithen about the allure of boys' night. He winks suggestively, stating that a man can't be expected to eat mutton curry everyday. The implication is that the man/father who is able to perform his autonomy in relation to his ability to mediate his wife's performance of womanhood is, in effect, affirming his value as being good at being a man/father. The corollary is that the woman who performs the symbols of her womanhood by sticking and staying is also performing the value of being good at.

In the yard, Gita represents the woman who sticks and stays. She cooks and bakes and cleans and opens the door to Jithen regardless of whether he has been out all night or hasn't been home for the weekend. She, as is everyone else in the yard, is aware that he has a mistress. Although she has questioned him about it, and has been beaten repeatedly for interfering in his affairs, she continues to stick and stay, cooking, cleaning and caring for Uma like the good daughter and wife that Uma says she is. A few months before Sivan's and Sayah's separation, and since Sayah began suspecting that something was amiss, she, however, began contesting the meaning of sticking and staying. For example, she employed a domestic worker who she says began to receive more attention from Sivan than she did. Sivan, she says, told her that if she couldn't behave like the woman of the house he didn't need to concern himself with her. Suffice to say that the domestic worker was dismissed soon after. However, subsequent to Sivan moving out, Sayah established a small-scale catering business that she runs from the kitchen of her home. Small businesses in and around the area comprise the majority of

her clients and cooking and baking for commercial purposes takes up much of her time. Although she continues to cook for her family for the most part, she also takes her children out to dinner more frequently and fast food, especially Nandos,[15] has become a regular event. In this context, where Sayah has taken a woman's preparation of food, something intimately connected and valued within the domestic sphere, and made it saleable on the open market, Sivan's and Jithen's overriding perception of Sayah and her children is that they have changed their values and become more commodity oriented.

Further, this has also affected Sayah and Gita, who were once co-conspirators and each other's primary source of support for in the yard. Gita, aware of Sayah's ability to dispose of the income she generates as she sees fit, and aware of her growing independence has begun to question her own value. She is in tears when we talk, lamenting what she calls her wasted life spent cooking and cleaning, talking about her loneliness and isolation in the yard, and saying, "if it wasn't for my children I would have killed myself long ago." On the other hand, she also talks snidely about Sayah, sharing her husband's opinion that she is a corrupting influence on the yard, and implying that instead of being preoccupied with making money she should be worrying about her family. Sayah, aware of all the gossip, has also become sensitive to being compared to Gita, a comparison, which she notes, makes her feel like "a useless mother." In this context, it is almost as if Sayah has flouted the symbols of kin and gender in the kin network of exchange, becoming contaminated by servicing those outside the yard boundaries at the expense of those on the inside. Here, it becomes apparent that there is a confrontation between different structures of scale and that food is an important symbol that informs performances of sameness and difference, and tradition and modernity.

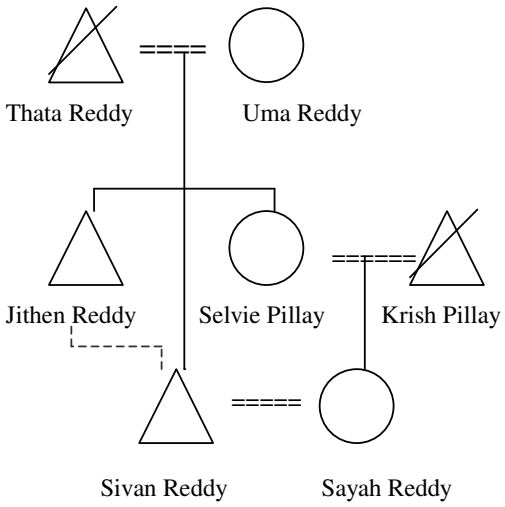
In relation to this, it is also interesting to note that Sivan begins to feel violated as a father/provider because the family, as he says, has changed its values. He states: "Westernisation has taken over our jungle where you were king. It puts in new rules for men and women. It tells you what to want. Women want to work. I'm not against women but I think that her place is with her children and her family." Given that Sivan

no longer lives with Sayah, and that in practical terms she is no longer in a position to cook regularly for him, he nonetheless feels that her engagement in food for money impacts on his position on the continuum of self and worth. In the context of the yard's lexicon and the symbols transacted in the kin network of exchange, it is almost as though Sayah's catering business has resulted in her metamorphosis from kin body to class body. Here, I suggest that food becomes such a contested symbol of identity because in certain cultures it is as Liechty (2005) suggests an important means of naturalizing social hierarchies, including kin and gender hierarchies. Liechty (2005) draws on the linguistic associations between food and sex showing that women have often been identified with meat and brothels with meat houses. This correlates with Jithen's analogy of food and sex in the domestic domain to "eating mutton curry every night," and the common phrase, frequently heard among the men of the yard that "variety is the spice of life." Metaphorically then, this suggests that the performance of woman/wife/mother in the yard means cooking the mutton curry every night, while the performance of man/father/provider means being able to choose whether to eat that curry or not. Although Sivan may not be present to eat, this does not imply that Sayah should not cook or that she should cook for someone else. Mediating the symbols of food and sex in this scenario therefore enables Sivan to be the consumer. In the context of altered circumstances where Sayah's food is available on the open market, it is not surprising that Sivan begins to feel commodified and consumed or, as he terms it, "raped and used." It is significant to note that this depreciating value seems to be confined to experience within the ideological space of the yard. Sivan, after all, manifests as a class body in other contexts, including when he says proudly that unlike many men who have to eat dhal[16] at home, he can afford to go to restaurants and eat prawns every night of the week if he chooses to. However, it must once again be remembered that his class difference, within wider discursive structures, does not equate with his difference insofar as it is valued as commodity within the yard's closed network of cultural particularity. After all, Sivan's performance of providing only becomes exchangeable for value as anti-commodity, or as good at being a man/father if it can be made sense of within a particular code of shared meaning. Within the context of this code, Sayah's performance of being good at does not include cooking for commercial gain. Given that the code of meaning has been breached, it is not surprising

therefore that Sivan's value shifts. Disparaging Sayah's entrepreneurship in the hope that she will perform tradition is, therefore, not a simple case of male dominance and female oppression. Rather, it is about repairing a breach of meaning since within this context, being valued at being good at being a man/father is related to performances of being good at being a woman/mother. The commercialisation of food in the yard therefore seems to parallel shifts in the politics of gender and kinship.

Figure 1

Kinship diagram illustrating that bio-genetic brothers are also putative father and son and that bio-genetic kin are also affines



Key: Male: △ Female: ○ Deceased male: ⊿ Bio-genetic relationship: —

Married: == Putative relationship: ----

Chapter 5: Kin and gender identity in the yard

The Reddy family's story illustrates how kin relations extend beyond norms of relatedness, so that brother becomes father, brother becomes son, and father becomes friend. These extensions of relatedness are, however, neither just classificatory nor just real terms of kin address and identity. They are constructed from shared codes of meaning that involve processes of both contest and acceptance. These processes, I suggest, are about ways of relating in which being good at being a man/father connects performances of providing with other symbols that mediate kin identity. Within this context, the ways in which the value of man/father is negotiated in the yard's kin network of exchange includes the ways in which the genetic and social meanings of kinship are made meaningful.

Meanings of kin identity narrated on the boundary of the skin

Sivan and Sayah have been married for 25 years and apart from the three years for which they have been separated, they have lived together with Sivan's mother and his brother, Jithen's family. However, the bonds of kinship between Sayah and Sivan exceed that of husband and wife, for Sivan is also Sayah's mother's brother. Biologically then, Sivan's family is also Sayah's family and her brother-in-law and her mother-in-law are also her uncle and her granny respectively. This is illustrated in Figure 1. However, Sayah's consanguineal link to Sivan and his family are considered secondary to the affinal relationship. Sivan is first and foremost her husband, and Jithen is her brother-in-law. Although the incest prohibition has been breached through endogamous relations, this element of relatedness has been subordinated to ways of relating that appear consistent with kin exogamy. The blood tie is rarely spoken of to either family insiders or outsiders. This, however, does not necessarily imply that it is regarded as a shameful secret and Sivan, in recounting it terms the marriage as 'arranged' between his father and Sayah's father. By so doing, it is made sense of, since arranged marriages have had, and continue to have, albeit with less frequency, the normative status of acceptability in this particular community. Sayah's desirability as a prospective bride was perhaps also made sense of, by the fact that the standards of beauty by which she was chosen extended beyond the endogamous group. Here, Sivan

states that his father wanted him to marry Sayah because she was the only granddaughter that he would buy sweets for since she was "fair skinned." Gita, Jithen's wife is also light skinned and this not only contributes to her being considered beautiful, it is also a sign of Jithen's and, by extension, Sivan's prestige. "How you got so lucky to find two beautiful girls for such black fellas," is part of a frequent rhetoric that Uma engages in with extended kin as well as with matrons of the community, especially those with marriageable sons. Such comment balances envy with applause for the good fortune of the Reddy family. In response, Uma grins and pretending to be offended she swats the air sharply, saying: "Go way you. My daughter-in-laws are lucky too. My sons look after them. They are not short for anything." Witnessing this, Jithen and Sivan smile and shrug expansively, and it seems to me that their silence corroborates Uma's sentiments while simultaneously reinforcing the valued attribute of men capable of wearing their status with humility.

Such an exchange is welcomed as a way of performing the status of the yard. A light skin is an aspect of women's gendered bodies that is highly prized in this community and Jithen's and Sivan's prowess as men who are capable of accessing what has superior cultural value serves as one more indicator of their value in terms of being good *at* being men. Perhaps this kind of playful rhetoric also allows the politics of beauty and the gendered body, to which the yard is subject, to be expressed in terms that are ostensibly non-threatening to the status of those who do not have access to this particular symbol of value. This is significant given that Uma, her sons and her grandchildren consider themselves as "black" in terms of skin colour. In a sense then, Sivan's and Jithen's 'beauty,' premised on their skill as providers and protectors, means that their worth cannot be gauged according to the terms used for their wives. Similarly, Uma's status lies in her symbolic worth as matriarch. Constructions of race are also significant here and typologies of Indianness such as emphases on personal and domestic hygiene, on the morality of Indian women who are not expected to engage in sex outside marriage, on children who are raised in "decent" homes, on family cohesion and stability, on traditions of home cooked meals prepared by mothers for whom family is the foremost consideration, and on fathers who provide, are often evoked to draw distinctions between the yard and racial Others. Whites, for example have "lost their

values." (Sayah Reddy October 2006). The women of the yard construct White and Coloured women, especially those that drink, smoke and go out on their own or with other women as "easy." Although Sayah herself has begun to drink, smoke and go out since her separation from Sivan, I suggest that her stance is not really hypocritical since she constitutes her subject position in terms that are quite different from those of whites and coloureds. As an Indian woman with "values" she resents the yard's disapproval of her behaviour, especially that of Sivan and Jithen. She asks angrily: "What do they think I am, one of their coloured whores who doesn't care if her children see her fucking around!" Sayah, therefore, seems to recast the yard's lexicon insofar as it pertains to the behaviour of its women, to make sense of her very breaching of it. Agency then, as Zizek (1999) implies, is not so much about the power to fix new boundaries as it is about reconceptualising the old ones.

Negotiating the value of kin and gender on the cusp of blood and social relations

Sayah's skin colour extends, however, beyond gendered beauty. In the yard's map of meanings it marks her desirability as a wife and is evoked to make sense of marriage and sexual relations between uncle and niece. The cultural significance of incest is thus tempered by other symbols according to which wife and woman, and by association husbands and men, acquire cultural value in the yard. More than this, however, the yard's map of meanings suggests that the lines between consanguinity and affinity are blurred. In this instance the marriage and sex relation between Sayah and Sivan seems to recast ideas of such relations being against "nature" (Strathern 1992), where nature is a reference to what is conceived of as the inviolability of blood. It is, after all, only against nature if family is separated into distinct parts of 'family as nature' and 'family as made,' and if prohibitions such as incest are not only premised on such distinctions but also work to re-inscribe them. The meanings of family, and perhaps more significantly of the ordered coherence of the conjugal family or "the integrity of the family" as Malinowski (Simpson 2006:5) terms it, are thus called into question.

In this context, it is, however, important to qualify that the yard is aware of dominant discourse surrounding incest and apart from Sivan and Sayah, it is not something that is

generally practiced. The younger generation, in particular, find it abhorrent to imagine sexual relations with their close blood relatives. Their idea of 'close,' however, seemed to extend more towards those family members with whom they were in constant contact with rather than to any particular degree of consanguinity. Pushing this line of questioning further made me feel that I would come across as being judgmental of Sivan and Sayah. Here then, I can only speculate. However, it is also important to note that Sivan and Sayah's relationship does not seem to inspire horror or disgust, regardless of generation. Despite not being representative of the norm, they are also not representative of a special case requiring a special set of rules. In other words, their relationship is merely accepted and made sense of in terms that are familiar to the yard. These terms are not, however, easily assimilable with South African legal discourses, including recent revisions to family law such as the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act of 1998.[17] While this requires further research, suffice to say that in terms of civil law, Sayah's lawyers have informed her that her marriage is illegal and her children illegitimate. South Africa, in line with most of the world, sanctions marriage and sex relations based on kin exogamy, and ideas of incest continue to be defined as sex and marriage between "close relatives"[18] and as intra-familial sex relations.[19] The problem with this, however, is that the definition of close relatives and family is vague. The implication is that as categories they may be presumed classified with the frames of reference of dominant and generified discourse. It was only after Sayah had consulted with lawyers regarding a divorce settlement that she became aware of her status as 'illegal' and aware of the fact that even under the legal provisions made for customary law, her marriage formalised according to Hindu religious custom, remains unrecognised. In this instance, Sayah's 'misconception' is not unusual or farfetched. Budlender et al (2004) highlights the methodological challenges of compiling statistics on marriage in South Africa given the fact that culturally heterogeneous customs and traditions result in variable interpretations of marital status that are often disjunctive from legislation. Nevertheless, Sayah's lawyers seem to have found a way to navigate these complexities, drawing on the fact that since she had cohabited with Sivan for a period of more than five years and had had an intimate relationship with him, she is able to attain the status of a common law wife. Within this context, kinship practices, insofar as they reflect elements of tradition and cultural

particularity, thus seem to occupy an awkward position in relation dominant discourse, highlighting the tensions within ideologies of multiculturalism and the rainbow nation.

In the yard Sayah is the embodiment of consanguineal kin *and* affinal kin. Her status as kin member therefore straddles the borders of what is conventionally defined as natural kin and made kin. Further, while her affinal terms of address take precedence over her consanguineal terms of address, the meaning attached to such terms seem inconsistent with ideas of affinity as temporal or fictive. This points to the fact that although the social organization of the yard is indeed premised on genealogical and affinal relations, the meanings of family and of belonging to the family is staged and performed according to a very particular cultural lexicon. Here, it is useful to revisit the concept of the yard's kin network of exchange where the identity of men/fathers and the cultural value rests not solely, nor even primarily, on their degree of relatedness. Their ability to access the symbols of manhood/fatherhood, to negotiate its meaning and ultimately to perform it are also significant regulators of inclusion and/or marginality. Similarly, Sayah's light skin symbolizes beauty. Beauty in turn symbolises an important element of her desirability as a woman, a wife, and, therefore, of her value as a gendered body. In this way, I posit that something seemingly innocuous and superficial seems to mediate the categories of blood and affinity. This is because Sayah's beauty in the kin network is not only exchangeable for her value as a gendered body but also for value as a kin body. In other words, she is valued as family because she adds to the value of the family, and vice versa. In the context of a kin economy of exchange, she and the family may thus be conceived of as anti-commodities.

Discursive structures of scale that mediate the meanings of kin and gender identity

In a cultural space such as the contact zone, where meanings between social actors are negotiated and rendered mutually translatable, performing those meanings for value is tantamount to engaging in a process of reciprocity. The yard, therefore, helps to construct Sayah, in line with local and broader community discourses on colour and beauty, as prestigious. Here, it is noted that the members of the yard, especially the women and their daughters, engage with western images of beauty mostly in the terms

through which Bollywood presents it. Apart from soap operas such as *Isidingo* and *The Bold and the Beautiful*, the television is regularly used to screen Bollywood movies of which they have a vast collection. It is Aishwarya Rai, Rani Mukerjhee, and Priety Zinta[20] that are iconised for their beauty. It is their faces and bodies that are evident in the local newspapers such as *The Leader* and the *Chatsworth Sun*. I have not seen a copy of *The Sunday Tribune* or *The Daily News* in the yard. It is these actresses with their light skins, long straight hair and voluptuous bodies that influence the make-up, hair, clothing and general body image of the yard's women. It is Aunty Radha, the local dressmaker that is charged with copying the latest style of sari blouse or dress that an actress in the most recent blockbuster wore, and it is Aunty Saras in her small beauty shop at the local shopping centre that uses an old Indian technique called threading[21] to groom the eyebrows of all the yard's women, enabling them to approximate the look of their beauty icons. The radio is tuned to Radio Lotus, a station that features Indian presenters, deejays and newsreaders and is concerned with the interests of Durban's Indian population. I have listened to talk shows hosted by, among others, popular radio personality Devi Sankaree Govender, on how Indians, especially the youth, are losing touch with their traditions. Male and female callers, for example, were concerned by the fact that children and other family members seemed to prefer Nandos and Kentucky chicken to home cooking. Hindi music is played in the homes and cars of informants, and "English music," as it is termed in the yard, including pop, rock and kwaito, are considered respectively as White or African music. Such music is, however, listened to by Jithen and Sivan's children. In this context, bhangra, a blend of Hindi and western pop music, perhaps best illustrates cultural generification, and the idea of border crossings. It is played frequently as well. Opera and classical music, on the other hand, is viewed as "just weird" (Priven Pather April 2006).

Billboards on the main roads of the area, and in local shopping centers in Chatsworth advertise using women who reflect this beauty ideal. Similar billboards can be seen along the Higgenson Highway, which comes off Durban's south bound and north bound freeway and which is the only highway that leads into and out of Chatsworth. Naomi Campbell and Kate Moss, supermodels of the global media, are familiar, but glossed over, names. The yard and their extended kin admit that Campbell is "pretty even

though she is black," (Sayah Reddy and her sister Dashni Pather: June 2006) and although they constantly wish they could lose weight, think that: "women must have curves and meat on her bones" (Sayah Reddy and her cousin, Vimi Chetty: June 2006). "Men," they say, "do not want to feel bones." The skinny toned body that dominates global vogue seems to carry little sway here. In an ideological space such as the yard, in which women's subjectivity and value is wrapped up with motherhood, the image of the body as a site of reproduction becomes significant. The "fleshy female," as Bordo (1993:208) puts it, is an evocation of maternal and domestic power. In performing the son, Sayah's son Nilesh and Gita's sons Naveen and Praveen staunchly defend their mothers, especially after verbal or physical attacks from their fathers.

One Sunday morning, after hearing through the community grapevine that Jithen had hit Gita for questioning him about his whereabouts the previous night, I visit her. I find her eldest son, Naveen, there. Naveen, after checking that his father was away for the day left his own wife at home, and came to spend the day with his mother, bringing her steamed mielies and tea while she stayed in bed. Sobbing, Gita stated that she could always rely on her sons to look after her. Sivan and Jithen, as Uma's sons, also make sure that she is cared for and Sivan says that he will never do anything to hurt his mother, even though that means he has to remain tied to Sayah since Uma believes there will be reconciliation. While the yard's women, like many other women, go on the occasional diet to shed weight in line with dominant discourses on the body as beautiful and desirable, there are, therefore, other symbols of womanhood that mediate their body image. For example, their professional counterparts may find value in equating the quest for the lean body with "freedom from a reproductive destiny" (Bordo 1993:209). This association with symbols of discipline and control, symbols that have associations with male power and high cultural value, may therefore be perceived as a path to empowerment. The yard's women who set much store on cleavage, well rounded hips and derriere, seem to, on the other hand, have much of their power caught up in this very guise of maternal femininity and the kin body, a guise that in other contexts is perceived as stripping women of power. Although their husbands provide, they are also productive businesswoman generating income. In their terms, however, woman's power does not necessarily come from her earning capacity; in certain contexts it may even be

an anomaly of womanhood/motherhood that threatens her power in other spheres. It would be reductive, therefore, to conceive of such women, in any general sense, as either traditional or modern, subjugated or empowered. In any given context they may be either, or both, or varying composites of in-between. Here then, women's associations with nature and therefore with universal subordination, and man's association with culture and universal domination, is not as categorical or as unambiguous as Ortner (1974) sometimes suggests. This suggests further that the line between hegemony and ideology, insofar as power is interpreted and performed either as resistance or conformance to regulation is a fine, and perhaps ever shifting one.

Discursive structures of scale are at work here and in a broader South African context the yard does indeed appear marooned on a desert island, representative of the gulf between cultures in a multicultural society. Corresponding, the yard also reflects a degree of intra-cultural homogeneity, re-inscribing aspects of local, or community, discourses on gender, kinship, race and class. However, it is also, in a sense, isolated from the community beyond its boundary walls. This, I do not think, is isolation born from fear of being ostracised due to the fact of incest. After all, the Reddy family has lived in this community for more than twenty years along with many of their neighbours. From all accounts they are respected and neighbours and other members of the community have been invited to the yard for wedding celebrations and religious ceremonies where they have interacted with Sivan and Sayah's extended family. It seems unlikely, therefore, that the incest relation is secret. Perhaps it is the yard's greater access to material resources, courtesy of its excellent providers, that allows them to perform symbols of identity, or in the context of this discussion to embellish beauty, on a grander scale. In a community where yellow gold is valued as an indicator of wealth and status, used in bridal jewellery and displayed predominantly on women, Sayah and Gita sport earrings, rings, neck chains and bangles on each arm made of a thickness that not many can afford or, rather, that not many providers can afford. This allows differentiation into Them and Us at various levels, intensifying the need to reinforce all kinds of borders so as to construct and protect value and power.

Race: A discourse that criss-crosses ideological boundaries of sameness and of difference

This kind of cultural particularity manifests itself in the yard such that symbols of gender and kin are transacted within a seemingly closed network of exchange. Meanings of wife, of daughter-in-law, and of woman, are therefore subject to the hegemony of a cultural lexicon that seems to surpass the primacy of biological codes of identity. Sayah's identity as beautiful wife and valued family member is, therefore, also contingent on how well she performs her beauty. This is her reciprocation for the value loaned to her by the yard. Here, her light skin and plucked brows must act as a backdrop against which Sivan can perform his status as a man who can secure a valuable resource, it helps to make Uma an object of envy and admiration, and adds to the status of the yard as a whole. Further, this suggests that Sayah's value as kin and as woman also rests on various interpretations of beauty in multiple contexts. While the basic criteria for beauty is a light skin, it too is mediated by other symbols and performances of gendered kin identity.

A similar analogy may be drawn with family where the basic criteria of blood and affinity require mediation by other symbols and performances of identity. It helps to explain why some blood kin are more valued than others, why some affines find greater favour than others, and why particular affines may be given precedence over particular blood relatives in certain contexts. If Sayah cooks well, keeps a tidy home and performs respect for Uma, Jithen and Sivan, her beauty accumulates value. If she is remiss in her duties and does not mediate the other symbols of kin and gender to which she is subject, she depreciates in value as "rubbish," or as a commodified identity that, as Sivan notes, "just wants and wants." For example, since Sivan and Sayah have separated, Sayah's lifestyle has changed considerably. She goes out regularly on her own or with her two daughters Nivi and Kalay, either for shopping, coffee, dinner, movies, to the beach and occasionally clubbing, usually when popular Durban nightclubs feature bhangra night. Sayah's best friend, Vimi, is a single mother of three children. She is also Sayah's mother's sister's daughter. Her youngest child, Katy, is 18 years old. The both of them frequently join Sayah, Nivi and Kalay on their outings. During two of these outings, one to Rivets nightclub and the other to a coffee shop at the Sun Coast Casino the

conversation oscillates between stories of the men who have abandoned, betrayed and abused them to their loneliness and ongoing search for boyfriends who "we can trust, who will respect and care for us" (Sayah and Vimi: February 2006).

The clubs, coffee houses and restaurants that Sayah visits are patronized predominantly by Durban Indians. Nandos is the most popular fast food choice, especially on Friday nights. However, the yard kin, their friends and other relatives favour one particular Nandos that has a predominantly Indian clientele. It is located in Malvern, a historically white area that over the recent past has been increasingly bought up by Indians. The preferred malls for shopping and coffee gatherings are the Pavilion in an area close to the suburb of Westville and Gateway in Umhlanga. Indians make up a significant percentage of the customer profile at these venues. Sayah and her family stay away from the mall in Musgrave because too many Africans go there. They also stay away from the largest shopping centre in Chatsworth, The Chatsworth Centre, because it is crowded and the quality and range of clothing stores and restaurants do not compare with those on the 'high street.' The beach of choice for Sayah, her children and their other friends and relatives is called Blue Lagoon, a beach that during Apartheid South Africa was reserved for Indians only. A popular restaurant, The Banana Leaf, specializes in curry and caters for the Indians that continue to comprise the largest proportion of visitors to this beach. The night clubs, in particular, are part of the social scene frequented by younger unmarried people, married couples under 35 years of age, as well as middle-aged married men usually in groups of two or three.

In terms of its links with local community, the social network that Sayah has begun engaging with outside the yard is therefore still very insular. Apart from it becoming a space that symbolises Sayah's liberation from the yard, it also becomes a space in which she continues to be identifiable by members of her community as Sivan Reddy's wife and as a member of the yard. As such she continues to be subject to surveillance, especially if the gendered and kin codes of behaviour she is expected to perform appear to be inconsistent with local discourse. Rivets, a jazz club located in Durban's Hilton hotel, has introduced bhangra[22] evenings on Saturday nights in an attempt to lure Indians. Prior to this, nobody from the yard, including their friends or other collateral

kin that I engaged with would go to Rivets. The reason cited was that Rivets was a jazz venue and there were too many Africans there. On the bhangra night I attended, the club was packed with Indians; not an African person in sight. The reasons given for this desire for sameness is that Africans are generally wild and that Indians don't feel safe or comfortable around them. Yet, this apparent closing of ranks seems to contradict the rescinding of Apartheid legislation, the opening up of racially bounded landscapes, the focus on nation building and democracy. Perhaps, however, this occurs as a direct response to possibilities of what Errington and Gewurtz (2001) term cultural generification, a process by which cultural particularities are decoded and made legible according to dominant discursive structures. For example, the people of the yard and their friends and other family say that they don't like going to beaches where there are more Whites than Indians. In comparison to the scantily clad white women, who Nivi and Kalay say, "have no shame," the yard's women feel uncomfortable and out of place. Nilesh and his cousin, Priven (Sayah's sister's son), while stating that they don't mind the thong bikinis, also admit to feeling uncomfortable. "They all look at you like there's something wrong with you," Priven says (January 2006).

Sivan's experiences within the context of the family business, insofar as it manifests as an ideological space beyond the borders of the yard, contrasts sharply with the yard's lexicon. As such, it shows up the extent to which the yard is representative of a closed network of meaning. He talks about how his meanings have shifted since leaving the yard, saying:

> I got married young. I was 20. I never had life experiences outside what I knew in the family. I began to think that there must be something more and only since I left I am discovering that there is so much to life. Now in my work I travel, I meet different people from all over the world. I never thought I could have a white friend because there was this mental barrier. I never thought I could sleep in the same bed as a black friend because we had this phobia about blacks being dirty. My family is still stuck with these ideas. By leaving the family I have been able to break so many of my own barriers. … I have been able to create a different network … By moving away from the family and having my own house friends know my house is open to them. We can talk any language there. It has opened up the world for me (Excerpt from interview with Sivan Reddy: March 2006).

Priven's, Nilesh's, Nivi's and Kalay's interpretations and experiences of race suggest that local knowledges, whose networks of exchange house lexicons of particularity from

which value and identity is derived, may thus become distorted as they become translatable. Here, the terms of reference that distinguishes Self from Other becomes compromised. Sivan's experiences, however, also illuminate the ways in which access and engagement with wider networks of knowledge and meaning can help to make the self more viable and more legible in contexts beyond the local. Of course, the flip side of this is that one's position shifts with regard to the local context, and this is reflected by Sivan's great anxiety that since his separation from Sayah and the children he has to constantly find ways to negotiate his presence in their lives. This begs the question then of whether the dissolution of the Self can be contained by reinforcing borders or by opening them up. Perhaps hope lies in the idea of border crossings (Rosaldo in Tsing 1993:21) and in the dialectic of sameness and difference that Sax (1998) discusses.

Chapter 6: Some relational constructions of kin and gender identity in the yard

Gauging from the social scene preferred by informants, it would seem that recently, the Saturday night bhangra at Rivets is the place to see and be seen. Further, the fact that Sayah has not only been seen, but also seen drinking Smirnoff Spin[23] has been noted and reported on to Sivan and Jithen. The cultural lexicon of the yard insofar as it is informed by community discourse and vice versa therefore seems to extend itself to Rivets. The 15 kilometers between Rivets and the yard seems to be almost incidental in the sameness of space that Sayah and her daughters inhabit. In addition to this, Sayah has started a small scale catering business that she operates from home. She therefore spends increasing amounts of time on cooking and baking for commercial gain.

A man/father is a man/father because a woman/mother is a woman/mother

Sayah's newfound 'freedoms' do not cohere well with the yard's symbols for woman, wife, mother, and family. By association then, they do not facilitate performances of man, husband, father, and family, especially when the symbols of manhood/fatherhood on which good at is premised is compromised. For instance, Gutman (1996) investigates the stereotype of Mexican men as macho, and finds that a fixed code for archetypal machismo is not manifest in any culturally homogenous sense. Instead he considers it as an index of symbolic capital, the value of which comes from past narratives of manhood insofar as that past is intertwined with subsequent shifts and reinterpretations. Conforming to and at once resisting elements that typecast gendered identity results in an inter-play between what is termed hereditary consciousness and transformative consciousness, or hegemony and ideology. Defining Mexican men monochromatically is thus problematic. In this context machismo is perhaps better understood as part of an unfolding narrative that influences what men say and do *in order to be men*. Wife beating, alcoholism, abandonment of children, bullying, etc, may be part of it, but as Gutman (1996:15) notes, some men who are alcoholics are good providers and that violence often has more to do with unemployment than with gender itself. Being macho is therefore not subject to an innate formula; it is part of the value of men as constructed

on the continuum of self and worth. By extension, a man's position on the continuum is also about how he mediates the symbols of the past in relation to the symbols of change, and the symbols of hegemony in relation to those of ideology. After all, the value of the category 'macho' is that it provides a measure for manliness, as well as a measure against which to judge inadequacy.

Lancaster (1992) makes a similar point when he explores homosexuality in Nicaragua, illustrating that the status and stigma attached to homosexuals depends on their sexual roles as either passive or active. The man who takes the active penetrative role is still viewed as a "hombre-hombre, a manly man," (Lancaster 1992:239) while his partner is derogated to the level of "cochon," similar as Lancaster's (1992:239) informants noted, to a mattress, a thing, that you get on top. The passivity of the cochon thus objectifies him in terms other than those reserved for men. Being active is to give; it has masculine connotations. Being passive is to receive; it symbolizes the feminine. The cochon then is not quite a man, not quite a woman. He is much worse – a thing, available to be used by other men. These are the shared cultural meanings in Nicaragua, meanings that inform the performances of men, regulating behaviour lest they walk or talk, or play in a way that may be construed as cochon like. Machismo then, not only portrays what a man is, it also defines him by what he is not. The category cochon is therefore necessary for the category hombre-hombre. The dialectic of sameness and difference therefore operates at various levels and the dynamics of manhood are kept in play not merely because of the distinctions between men and women, but also because of the sameness and difference among men. In this way, Sivan's and Jithen's performances of providing is about positioning themselves on the continuum of self and worth in terms of what it means to be good at being a man. To be real men, they must provide. This makes them "kings of the jungle." This not only distinguishes them from women, it also sets them apart from the worthless men, the mukhus.

Worthless man/father and powerless woman/mother: Reflections in a two-way mirror

In February 2006, I accompany Sayah, her children and Sayah's younger sister Dashni to the Sun Coast Casino in Durban. It is evening, around 6.30, and Dashni says that her

husband, Suren, will join her at 8pm. They are going to the latest Bollywood blockbuster starring Amitabh Bachan. Suren was retrenched three years ago from a well paying job that he had had for a number of years. During this time Dashni had also been employed. However, her salary was significantly less than Surens' and he held the title, both de juré and de facto, of breadwinner and head of the house. Suffice to say that Suren is now self-employed as a builder, marketing himself by word of mouth and doing work, mainly small-scale renovations, at private residences whenever he can get it. His job security is non-existent, and Dashni, who is in secure employment as a bank manager, is acknowledged by her children and extended family as the breadwinner of the family. Dashni is the object of much family pity, especially by the women in the family, who feel she is exploited by a worthless husband. Over a cup of tea, Sayah asks Dashni if Suren is avoiding her and if that is the reason that he is only arriving later. Dashni replies despondently, saying he had a job to finish in Mobeni Heights.[24] Sayah says: "You mustn't let him treat you anyhow. You must work and look after him, what kind of man is that? Is he still not speaking to you?" Dashni responds: "No, he can't stay angry for long. It is difficult for him if he doesn't talk. What else can he do, his family don't live close by so what can he do, he has to end up talking to me." Sayah says angrily: "Ya, its good like that. You mustn't be stupid, you must use it. He must know his place, he must know that you can get ten husbands but you only got one family." Dashni turns to me, and sounding thoughtful, she says: "One thing about Sivan, although he doesn't live with his family, he is a good provider. He loves his children and you can't find fault with him for that."

Abu-Lughod (1986:96) recounts a similar story when she tells of Rashid, a Bedouin man who expressed great sorrow that his wife had run away and great happiness when she returned. Such behaviour contravened a Bedouin man's code of honour, a code based on a belief in his power that in turn stems from his autonomy. Rashid, however, had displayed an unacceptable degree of attachment to his wife that insulted his honour, inciting members of his family, especially the women, to deconstruct his masculinity as: "He's no man!" Expressing the same sentiment about men that Sayah expresses about family, Rashid's female cousin scolds Rashid's nephew for aligning his sympathies

with his uncle. She says tellingly: “Don’t ever get upset over a woman. Thank God we have men and money. There are lots of women. You can always get another.”

Men and money seem, therefore, to go together and yet it is also interesting to note that Suren’s worthlessness is linked to his limited earning power and that Dashni accrues her downtrodden personae, at least in part, through association with her husband’s status. The power dynamic operates at various levels here, and while Dashni’s power in the home may be correlated with Suren’s powerlessness – this is not a symmetrical relationship since image (social power of manhood) must also be maintained. When the disjuncture between ideal and practice becomes visible, where Dashni has made her husband’s ‘inadequacies’ known to her extended family, for example, there appears to be a correlation, instead of an antithesis between his status and Dashni’s status – his lack impacting on her image as downtrodden ‘poor Dashni’. In this context, the value of men who can provide as required by their families is highlighted. Perhaps part of the rationale is that it does not necessarily follow that those, such as Sayah and Dashni, who do not have sufficient money of their own, are not in a position to acquire some of the prestige that association with money, and those who have money carries. Abu-Lughod (1986:103), for instance, talks of ‘hasham’ or the honour of the weak, showing how those who do not have access to culturally valued symbols of power and prestige, resolve the tension between recognising their own constraints and recognizing the power of those higher up in the status hierarchy.

Performing the yard’s cultural lexicon in exchange for being good at being a man/father and a woman/mother

Husbands, fathers, brothers and sons, as providers, are, as Sivan says, responsible for the material needs and the physical safety of their families. They are, therefore, expected to know where their wives, unmarried daughters, unmarried sisters, and young sons are and how they are spending their time. Sayah’s behaviour especially during the last year when she has gradually realised that Sivan has no intention of reconciling has, however, transgressed the yard’s lexicon of sameness. This illustrates that identity and value is contested even within this microcosm of cultural particularity for while Sayah claims belonging to the yard, as one who has infringed its rules, the yard contests her

membership. After all, by transgressing the lexicon she has compromised Sivan's position on the continuum of self and worth. How can he retain his status of being good at being a man, and a valued kin member of the yard if she is not good at being a woman and a kin member of the yard? In the yard, perhaps Sivan becomes cuckolded by Sayah's flirtation with freedom, or as Hastrup (1997) might say, with the surplus meanings of woman that she has tapped into in the contact zone. If Sayah's catering business allows her to become financially independent, and to support the household in which her children reside, how does Sivan perform the role of provider upon which much of his cultural value as a father is premised? On a particular occasion when I accompany Sayah to Pick and Pay, I buy a bunch of flowers. She expresses surprise that I buy flowers for myself and I, in turn, am surprised by her reaction. She explains by telling me that if she bought flowers Sivan and Jithen would want to know who gave her the flowers and would accuse her of having an affair. She loves fresh flowers but she says in her house she can only have artificial ones. These she displays, like Gita, in most of the rooms in the house.

Purchases such as fresh flowers that cannot be accounted for in terms of the budget that Sivan makes available to Sayah must therefore be clamped down upon. This, I suggest, is because an economy of meaning is also at risk since in the kin network of exchange, wives receive gifts such as flowers from husbands, where flowers symbolize a particular relationship. If being good at being a husband intersects with being good at providing, then a wife who buys herself flowers may be sending the message that her husband is inadequate or remiss in his duties – or that someone else has usurped his place. Reinforcing the meanings of symbols in the network of exchange may therefore also be about hedging risk and protecting value on the continuum of self and worth. Paradoxically then, the control of material resources is tied up with the performance of providing. This is because the control of material resources, in that it is acceptable to use money to buy some things but not others, such as flowers, is also about the management of symbolic resources that impact on the construction and preservation of the self as man/father/husband, etc. Neither the kin body of patriarch, nor the gendered body of man is representative of power and dominance in any unilateral or universal

sense. The kin body, as Bordo (1993) says of the gendered body, does not escape the imprint of culture.

Observations conducted in the yard during this time indicated that relations between Sayah and Jithen in particular, were strained, especially when Jithen, in a show of support for Sivan, installed surveillance cameras along the communal driveway. While Jithen insisted that escalating crime in the area prompted this action, Sayah was convinced that it was an attempt to restrict her mobility. During this time of tension, Uma and Sivan echoed Jithen's sentiment that "looks are not everything!" With the family rumour mill latching onto this yard drama, whispers soon reached Sayah about her fall from grace and beauty. Collateral relatives such as aunts who were now referring to her as: "that rubbish," illustrates how the narrative of beauty can be rewritten as the narrative of the abject.

The point that I am trying to make is that neither the genetic code for light skin, nor the genetic code for family has significance sans cultural interpretation. The same point can be made with respect to constructions of economic value, particularly the value of identity as commodity and anti-commodity. By extension, the gendered and kin meanings of man in the guises of father, husband, brother, son, etc and of woman hinges on how various symbols that construct identity are mediated by social actors in situated contexts. By showing how beauty mediates the boundaries of family and gender, I therefore try and illuminate the artifice of fixed cultural categories. Drawing clear lines between real kin and made kin, or between close kin and distant kin is a matter of interpretation as impacted upon by the discursive networks within which meaning and value is created. In other words, there is more to kinship than biological and/or affinal connection, just as there is more to beauty than skin. The corollary therefore, is that kinship cannot easily be dichotomised into blood kin and made kin, and that just as beauty does not merely sit on the skin, blood does not slot neatly into place above the made. In the yard's kin network of exchange, where protecting the borders of family particularity is an important signifier of belonging, does Sayah's blood tie mean that she is considered to be more family than Jithen's wife, Gita? Sivan, for instance says that if a man goes out at night and returns home at three in the morning, he expects his wife to

welcome him home and to ask if she should serve him a plate of food. If she does this, the next time he is out he will want to come home at midnight instead of at five in the morning. Sayah wanted to control him, she changed and no longer got up when he came home, so he no longer felt like coming home to her. Gita, he says, still waits for Jithen, and no matter how late he comes, she keeps his food ready. Are the symbols and meanings of kinship that Gita is expected to perform not also part of the network within which Sayah is engaged? Surely the answers depend on whom the questions are being addressed to in particular time and space. If there is no easy answer to this, then the divisions that mark close kin from outsider on which the laws of incest are premised are surely not as sacred as dominant social discourse purports it to be.

The skin as a body boundary, beauty as aesthetic boundary, blood as kin boundary and the yard space as ideological boundary all work to construct subject-hood within contours of power. What is desirable is thus pre-packaged, and so is its cultural value. In the construction of the Other it is required that a pure body be measured against a contaminated one, that pretty versus ugly, blood versus non-blood, commodity versus anti-commodity, and sameness versus difference. Yet, conceptualising culture and identity as a borderland is that "a border has an imagined other side," (Tsing 1993:21). This resonates with Sax's (1998) idea of culture as a "dialectic of sameness and difference" in which the value of the Self depends on what one does not want to be. The Other is thus a measure, or distorted reflection, of the Self in a "hall of mirrors" (Sax 1998). More in keeping with the subject of kinship, Strathern's characterisation of kinship as the "duplex nature of the relational" (Simpson 2006:3) suggests that carving up kinship into the categorical and the interpersonal and subsequently focusing on kinship as a navigation between fixed points of connection, or even co-existence between them, has limited understandings of kinship.

Chapter 7: The yard and its engagement of the social and genetic elements of kinship

Based on the discussion in the previous chapter, Strathern's (Simpson 2006:3) ideas on the "duplex nature of the relational" would seem to suggest that the interpersonal and the categorical elements of kinship are virtually impossible to separate since the one continually acts on the other. Simpson (2006:3) elaborates on this idea, saying that kinship is about, "a continual extension and reaffirmation of the social potential of the relational." Drawing on this idea, I argue, therefore, that the dynamics of kinship that play out in the yard substantiates this notion of kinship as complex imbrications of the social and the genetic, rather than an easily navigable route between them. In this way, the meanings of kinship and kin identity may once again be conceived of as forged within a contact zone (Hastrup 1997). It is in this space that the categorical and the interpersonal, or the genetic and the social, become co-present, mutating and assimilating to produce meaning. That this meaning, as in the case of the yard, may be the meaning of sameness suggests, therefore, that sameness, in similar vein to difference, is constructed from these complex imbrications of the social and the genetic. However, conventional thought on kinship prioritises the categorical, such that kin identities are premised on blood or affinal connection. In this context kin identities are presumed fixed, enabling the kin connection with lineals and laterals to be made evident. This is essential if kinship is to be structured and made sense of in ways that avoid role confusion and maintain "the integrity of the family" (Simpson 2006:5).

The incest taboo coupled with the prerequisite of exogamy underline the ideologies and discourse geared towards regulating the structure and meanings of kinship. By extension the, the continuance of this structure and these meanings depend, not on blurred intersections between the social and the genetic, but on clear divisions between them. Kinship thus becomes regulated by a discourse that stratifies connection according to a hierarchy of difference. Here, relationships based on consanguinity are marks of nature, continuous and beyond culture; whereas all other relationships are made, and may therefore, be unmade. In South Africa where prohibited degrees of affinity and incest is against the law, and where Sayah's and Sivan's marriage is not

legally recognized because Sayah is Sivan's sister's daughter, is the family of the yard a real family or a weird family? Can the particularity of the yard and its family be fully incorporated within a national identity, and can they be claimed as an authentic South African family? Such legislation made credible within nationalist discourse and ideology, thus seems at odds with particular cultural practices in which the meanings of family, kin identity, and of the Malinowskian preoccupation with "the integrity of the family" (Simpson 2006:5) may differ.

While it is generally acknowledged that the incest taboo is commonly adhered to, Fox (1967) notes that this is not universal. The reasons for avoiding incest are many. Apart from natural selection, some of the more persuasive arguments include the need to forge alliances beyond the closed kin network and the need to prevent "I'm my own grandpa" (Fox 1967:57) syndrome. While such arguments may have had a basis in our evolutionary history Fox (1967) suggests that the persistence of the incest taboo is more about how such arguments have become inscribed in cultural heritage, its meaning becoming a given according to which standards of normal and abnormal, moral and immoral are measured. The yard's meanings of family, and of the cultural value of kin and gendered bodies, substantiate Fox's (1967) view that incest does not inspire the same degree of horror across, or even within, cultures. I suggest that part of this may be attributed to the fact that the integrity of the yard family relies on imbrications, rather than on the denunciation, of the social and the genetic. In the yard's kin network of exchange, the categorical and the interpersonal are constantly engaged in negotiating sameness. This, I argue is because the integrity of the family is not just based on the conjugal or nuclear family, but also on the communal family. The very essence of this communalism hinges on a network in which roles and identities are neither fixed, nor singular. In this context, the cultural value of identity, of father, brother or son, or of wife or niece, for instance, is not based on clear distinctions between blood and social ties. This facilitates the forging of communal kin identities such that Sivan and Jithen are the fathers of all the yard's children. In terms of the kin terminology used in the yard Jithen is "big father" and Sivan is "small father," the distinction between big and small a reference to the fact that Jithen is older than Sivan.

In this context, the family business becomes an integral part of the yard, part of the family corporation that serves the interests of the family and is in turn served by it. Here, Sivan's sentiment of: "You can make money, but what is the value of money if you don't have a family?" is significant. Sage, as a family run corporation, draws from the yard's network of exchange to make sense of kin and gendered identity. It is privy to a wider network in that Sivan and Jithen have global business contacts, but at its core, Sage is centered around a small and exclusive group. I suggest that this is the group that represents the symbolic capital of the business and its stature and meaning as a family business. Sivan and Jithen state that family runs the business because they can be relied on to understand and practice the family code of honour and loyalty. Sivan says that, "the pillar stone of Sage is honesty and integrity," and that, "the family must abide by the standards of trust we have in the business to protect all our interests." The business then, as part of the yard, enables kin to perform their kinship on yet another set on the family stage. In this regard, Sivan notes that family, especially his and Jithen's children, are entrusted with the business because they are family. He says that, "the day they cross the lines [of family honesty and integrity] they are out" (March 2006).

The fact of kinship scrambling where brothers are communal fathers as well as father and son to each other also impacts on the ways in which the family business is incorporated within the yard's particular kind of family integrity. Here, the idiom of family becomes even more persuasive as ways of relating, rather than just blood ties, are so intricately interwoven. How does this dense web of manhood in which brother, son, and father are performed, extend to performances of Jithen and Sivan as business partners? On one level where the ideological space of business and yard intersect, cohesion and not contest seems to prevail. Here, Sivan notes that because of the view that the family is the business, Jithen, as head of the family and hence of the business, is in the process of distributing business shares to each of his children. Sivan is not comfortable with this and believes that while children should participate, and be promoted within the ranks of Sage, they should only inherit when their fathers die. To substantiate, he cites numerous examples relating to how children prematurely charged with the successful business empires built by their fathers, resulted in in-fighting, competition for control and eventual bankruptcy. More significantly, he notes that

fathers who cede majority control too early, become marginalized elders. This, he says, is a result of Indian men/fathers being groomed to provide till they die and that in the process children become spoon-fed. Without establishing a proper work ethic, children who are given too much too soon are bound to mismanage the business, focusing on individual aggrandizement above the collective interest, including the welfare and interests of their elders. Sivan says that Jithen, as father of the family, is cast in this mould of providing till he dies and that in addition to "carving up the business," he performs provider cum father by rarely refusing the material requests of the yard's children. Despite disapproving, Sivan notes that he does not feel able to challenge Jithen. For instance, although he may refuse Nilesh's request for a new car he knows that in the kin network of exchange where Jithen's identity as big father, father, big brother and provider, is constantly interwoven and transacted for value, especially through his performance as king of the jungle, Nilesh has recourse to other means.

In terms of gender, the yard's lexicon of sameness also supports the ways in which identities are managed in the business. As men and fathers, Sivan and Jithen are imagined primarily as providers. In this context, owning and managing Sage may almost be viewed as part of their obligation as kin and as men since Sage represents a resource that enables excellence in performances of providing. Here, Sivan says that that the driving force of his business is to be a provider because this is what enables him to be king of the jungle. He also says that while this may seem as though the women in his family are being denied opportunities, this is not so. Men, he says, create the foundations for women as well so that they can also be providers, albeit through men. In this context, he notes that women after all can never be king of the jungle because her strengths are different from those of men. Women he says do a much better job of rearing children but "in terms of providing [financially and physical protection] men come out tops." According to this, the imperative for Sivan to be tops seems more urgent than for Sayah. It supports the imperative to be a man and a father and not to be a mukhu. It is tantamount to attaining subjectivity. As head of the family business he can therefore mediate the yard's symbols of manhood and of kinship and perform his identity as provider. He thus becomes visible as someone who is good at being a man/father, the king of the jungle who is capable of holding onto his position on the

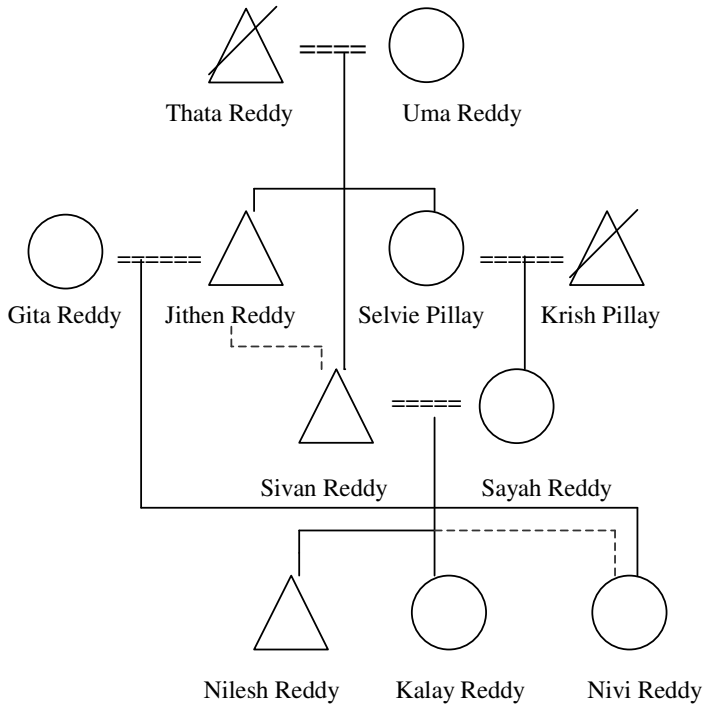
continuum of self and worth. For this to work, however, implies that the yard's women must perform their kinship and gender according to the same lexicon. Gita, Jithen's wife remains a devotee, Sayah, as we have seen, on the other hand, has been valued and devalued as beautiful and rubbish, respectively, her status like all the other members of the yard, dependent not on fixed ideas of blood, but on how her performance of self sustains the integrity of the yard, including the value of its men/fathers.

Deconstructing incest and the limits it poses to the possibilities of kinship

Exploring attitudes to advancements in new reproductive technologies in the English town of Alltown, Edwards (2004) illustrates how the concept of incest acts as a limit to the possibilities of kinship. Discussing the donation of sperm and ova, informants stated, for example that they were opposed to the idea of anonymous donors since children unaware that they had a biogenetic connection may meet, have sex and reproduce. However, they were also opposed to donations from family members, such as sperm from a boyfriend's father, or an ovum from a sister. The underpinning rationale related to the potential for conflation and conflict between kinship roles. According to these informants, a grandfather's role is quite different from a father's role, as is a mother's from an aunt's. A situation in which a grandfather who is also a father and an aunt who is also a mother is therefore problematic, since they may disrupt family roles by attempting to intervene in the discipline and general upbringing of the child. This threatens the role of the social mother or father, especially if performances of parenting constitute a significant part of identity as woman/mother and man/father. This parallels Malinowski's (Edwards 2004:763) views on the incest taboo, namely that children produced from sexual relations between kin is disruptive of the "stable and ordered relations … necessary for the socialization of children." It also infers that while sex between relatives is not required in these reproductive possibilities, ideas of incest, and its potential to scramble kin identities, nonetheless animate the boundaries of kinship. Once again, these interpretations of kinship are quite different from those evidenced in the yard, and the boundaries that the incest taboo is intended to safeguard do not have the same cultural value in this communal space of sameness.

Figure 2

Kin diagram illustrating that bio-genetic daughter is putative daughter and that bio-genetic brothers are putative father and son



Key: Male: △ Female: ○ Deceased male: ⊘ Bio-genetic relationship: —

Married: == Putative relationship: ----

Sivan, for example, is Jithen's biological brother, but he and Jithen are also in a son and father relationship, respectively. Nilesh is Sivan's son, but Sivan feels that he is father, brother and friend to Nilesh. Nivi, Sivan's daughter, is actually Jithen and Gita's biological child. She was 'given' to Sivan and Sayah when it seemed that Sayah was unable to conceive. Nivi, who is now 22 years old, is aware of these dynamics, but as a child of the yard she has two fathers, Jithen, her big father, and Sivan, her small father, and two mothers. Her loyalties depend not on connection to her biological father but on whether Sivan, who performs the symbols of fatherhood, performs it well enough to

attain value as a father. In situated contexts, each is valued in his/her particular role in terms of how he/she mediates the symbols of the categorical and the interpersonal such that they act upon each other. In the yard of sameness, the position that men/fathers, and other kin, are able to negotiate and hold onto on the continuum of self and worth hinges not on clear delineation of kin roles, but rather on its conflation. In yard's kin network of exchange, there are many symbols from which selfhood is transacted. Providing, together with its associations of protection and sacrifice is the embodiment, as Sivan states, of fatherhood and manhood. However, the performance of these symbols, and the ways in which such performances are interpreted and made meaningful is not limited to the preserve of the conjugal and nuclear family. In this context, the space in which identity is negotiated exceeds the limits of kinship that evocations of incest are designed to protect. It is in this way also that Sivan, not just as man/father, but also as brother, son and small father, is able to belong to the yard, while also asserting his autonomy from it. This once again evokes Strathern's idea of "the duplex nature of the relational" (Simpson 2006:3), and of the dialectic between sameness and difference (Sax 1998).

In the yard's cultural lexicon, the meanings of father are made visible through performing the provider. Sivan notes that this includes protecting one's family and performing acts of sacrifice. In this lexicon, son means performing respect, obedience, and gratitude, whereas the meanings of brother are rendered visible through performances of support and loyalty. While blood ties are evident in these relationships, it is therefore problematic to concentrate on these ties to fix identities in relation to one another. For example, in the case of Sivan and Jithen, should the brother/brother relationship take general precedence over the father/son relationship merely because the link of the former is 'self-evident,' its genealogical frame of reference favouring dominant kinship discourse? If the incest prohibition is designed to create and maintain a certain social order so that identities are structured in relation to one another, then the kin bodies of the yard with their multiple and conflated identities, or what Simpson (2006) terms "scrambled" kin identities, are, in a sense, representative of a kind of social incest. The distinguishing factor that makes Sayah and Sivan's relationship stand out as incestuous, at least in conventional terms, is the act of sex and reproduction. After all, the results of what I refer to as social incest, and of biological incest, appear to

approximate each other, in that both construct scrambled identities in the yard. After all, Sayah, by virtue of her incestuous union is Uma's granddaughter and daughter-in-law, whereas Sivan, by virtue of meanings transacted in the yard's kin network of exchange is Uma's son and grandson, given that he is also considered to be Jithen's son. In this context, Sayah's degree of consanguinity adds to, rather than causes, the ways in which kin identity is structured in the yard.

Constructing the integrity of the family by scrambling and unscrambling the meanings of consanguinity

Simpson's (2006) work on English kinship demonstrates how the borders within which legal interpretations of incest are housed are adjusted to accommodate otherwise alternative relationships within the conventions of family. In so doing, he highlights the arbitrariness of kinship categories such as the genetic and the social, with special emphasis on the scrambling and/or unscrambling effect this has on kin identities, and on the Malinowskian preoccupation with preserving "the integrity of the family" (Simpson 2006:5). However, the crucial point in this context is that the integrity of the family pertains to the creation and maintenance of the conjugal and nuclear family. Simpson (2006) discusses how English kinship law that prohibited marriage between affines has been revoked. One of the main reasons cited for the prohibition stemmed from the need to prevent role confusion such that one's grandfather did not become one's father and one's sister-in-law one's mother, for example. This would lead to what Simpson (2006) has called a scrambling of the structure and roles of the conjugal family, resulting in the integrity of the family being compromised. The church, a staunch supporter of the prohibition, especially in light of the belief that marriage united couples as one flesh, and by extension, one blood, implied that bodily substance now flowed between affinal kin, changed its position in the Church Commission Report of 1940. Malinowski, who stated that the incest prohibition was designed to prevent sexual relations between close consanguineous kin so as to structure the social relations and the order of the family, influenced this decision (Simpson 2006:5). The change in law required, therefore, that a clear distinction be made between consanguineous kin and affinal kin so that affinal kin who married and engaged in sexual relations did not carry the stigma of incest. In this instance, the ecclesiastical definition of incest that had previously included sexual

relations between affines was now reworked in line with reinterpretations of the law. Apart from this, the number of affines who were cohabiting and engaged in sexual relations indicated a disjuncture between legislation and practice. Legalising such relations within the conventions of marriage therefore meant that what had once transgressed the boundaries of kinship was now being co-opted. The integrity of the conjugal and nuclear family was thus re-inscribed.

However, as Simpson (2006) notes, this integrity is founded on shaky ground since kin identities are no longer fixed or singular. In the case cited in which a man marries his daughter-in-law and adopts his grandson as his son how does the kin network of exchange function to maintain two sets of father/son relationships? How are the symbols and meanings of father and of son exchanged, mediated and performed such that the value and visibility of one father or son does not relegate the other to the margins? What are the rights and obligations of lineal and lateral kin such as the child's grandmother who is also his father's ex-wife and his aunts and uncles who are also his siblings? In this kind of situation scrambling occurs despite, or perhaps because of, the integrity of the family. This scrambling is interesting given the fact that allowing affines to marry was made sense of by attempting to unscramble any blurring that existed between consanguineous kin and affinal kin. Ironically then, it is as if retreating to a kind of genetic essentialism has enabled the creative reordering of kinship possibilities. This case of affines being allowed to marry points, therefore, to the changing meanings of consanguinity and the ways in which such change redraws the bounds of incest.

Analogies may therefore be drawn with the case of the yard since the point at which kin identity is scrambled is also the point at which it is unscrambled, or made sense of. Subject to the yard's lexicon of sameness, blood and affinity intersect to draw the bounds of family. It is this lexicon that integrates this family within a tradition that makes sense to them, not as the horror of biological incest and the disorder of role confusion, but as: the integrity of the family. Similarly, in Simpson's (2006) work, we see how changes to kinship law prioritise a lexicon of difference such that blood and affinity appears disentangled. In so doing the borders of incest become reinvented and redrawn as: the integrity of the family. As Simpson (2006:6) says: "at the point at which family is realized, [it is] probably at its most fragile."

Reinventing fatherhood when the kin body is made manifest as class body

Performing the symbols of provider in the yard of sameness is, as I have attempted to illustrate, a realization of Sivan's value in terms of being good at being a man/father, just as Sayah's performance of beauty enables her to be good at being a woman/wife/mother. However, the surplus meanings in the kin network create the potential for contest and for difference. As such Sayah can become abject and Sivan, the prestigious embodiment of provider, can also experience himself as being, as he says: "raped." Conceived of as a cultural borderland, the yard of sameness has its imagined other side. Its meanings and identities are therefore prone to shift. Sivan's identity as man/father, and his value on the continuum of self and worth is therefore contingent on how he mediates the symbols of manhood and fatherhood in the yard border of sameness. In the yard of sameness imbrications of the social and the genetic construct and support the conflation of roles and identities. Here, for instance, the value of a man/father is transacted in association with his value as a provider. However, since Sivan has left the yard, he feels that his performance of providing has positioned him on the continuum of self and worth as "used," overshadowing his value of being good at being a man/father. Reciprocity then, in the form of loyalty, love, and respect, or "rent in kind," as Weber (1968:1010) terms it, are no longer guaranteed by his current performances of providing. He now balances on a tightrope, so precarious that he likens it to nylon, to find favour with his children and to find, what he calls, a way to place himself in their lives. In so doing, he has to continue to find ways to be good at being a man/father such that his physical absence from the yard makes minimal impact on the evaluation of his identity. Inviting his wife and daughters to choose jewellery and paying for it later, paying R7000 for a sari that Sayah wants to wear for Naveen's wedding, paying, albeit under duress, for a new Volvo for his teenage son, and for the BMW Z4 that Sayah drives, is part of this process. It is by no means the norm in the community, nor is this kind of extravagance usually expected from men who are marked as good providers. However, performing the extraordinary, I suggest, is a way for Sivan to set himself apart from other providers who are not separated from their families. It is a way to place himself in the yard and to make a statement that he is as good, if not better, a man/father/provider as men who live with their kin.

He says that as a businessman he has worked hard to provide for his family, but now that his family has changed its values, he no longer knows what he is providing for. With indirect reference to Sayah, he notes that when the wife of a man who is working hard to provide also decides to work, she no longer has enough time to look after the family. This results in the dynamics of the house changing so that the level of respect for the provider changes. In this context, when he asks himself what he is working for, the answer points to a family that "only wants and wants." If, as Herzfeld (1988) states, excellent performances of the symbols of identity are linked to performances of self-regard, the implication is that Sivan's performance of providing, insofar as it is symbolic of 'I,' has to be exchanged for value within a kin network that is representative of anti-commodities. Here, Shipton's (1989:10) definition of anti-commodities is relevant once again. He states that it is "the attachment between particular persons or groups, and particular property of special kinds" (1989:10). He goes on to say that should the attachment be broken, the value of the people and property alters becoming, in effect, tainted. In this sense, the network of kin exchange, within which providing was a symbol for fatherhood and within which performances of providing enabled a man's value as a father to be negotiated and transacted, is being overtaken by what Sivan terms, a family that has become about commodities. Ironically then, Sivan's way of placing himself in the lives of his family seems to have produced a juncture at which his, and his family's, identity as kin bodies are confronted by their identity as class bodies. In this context, an important yard tradition, namely: that prestige is acquired through men's/fathers' ability to provide has become interwoven with market oriented desires and values. Tradition and modernity seem to clash then when providing as a symbol of what it means to be good at being a man/father, is expressed in ways that are conceived of as external to the kin network of exchange, rather than as part of its surplus.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

Considering the fact that South Africa exhibits great cultural diversity, the engagement of discursive structures of scale and the role that this plays in processes of social transformation is significant. The rescinding of Apartheid and subsequent legislation aimed at addressing race and gender disparities, particularly via economic empowerment policies, have meant that ideological boundaries within which race, class and gender were constructed have begun to shift. In families where men/fathers derive cultural value from performances of providing, the impact of this should not be underestimated. Further, public discourse, while highlighting power differentials within the domestic sphere, inadvertently revalue many of the symbols of womanhood and motherhood, and manhood and fatherhood, by deconstructing them within dominant frames of reference that do not always correlate with local discourse. The dynamics of cultural diversity, and cultural value are, therefore, often neutralised within typologies as social transformation becomes presented as the path towards nationhood. This emphasis on type returns us to Smits (2006) ideas on the changing role of the father in dual income families where analysis remains locked within stereotypes of family and gender, and to Singh's (1996) ethnography in which Indian families in Phoenix, Durban, are portrayed within the ideological bounds of a collective ethic of kin responsibility, something they continue to practice despite the attempts of Apartheid policies to thwart it. Representing a point of departure, Hunter's (2004) view that that the roles of men/fathers is affected not just by their access to power, but also by their powerlessness in spheres such as the economic, serves as a useful reminder of the multiple contexts within which identity is constructed and performed. Similarly, Spiegel's work (1996) on domestic fluidity among African households in greater Cape Town also cautions against analysis of family that remains premised on conventional models of kin organisation and domestic dynamics.

With this in mind it becomes necessary to recognise that encounters among discursive structures of scale also act as a check on the totalising effects of dominant ideology. Given that family is conceived of as a basic unit of social organisation, it represents a locus of cultural particularity that nonetheless exists within the broader discourses of

cultural groupings perceived within the boundaries of community, society and nation. However, the notion of family itself is subject to these discourses and its meanings should not be taken as given. Within this context, local and global discourses, insofar as they relate to class, race, gender, and kinship, homogenise as well as differentiate between and among cultural groupings. This returns us to the ideological space of the yard within which kinship, and kin identity, are made manifest, incorporates both consensual and contested meanings of race, class and gender. Based on the idea that identity is multidimensional, these meanings operate as webs of signification, part of the process within which kin identity is constructed. Ideas of belonging and marginality therefore become bound up with how the symbols of identity, in this case manhood and fatherhood, are valued and performed in relation to spaces of cultural sameness and difference. The ways in which kin identity, in all its guises, fits within the particular while remaining relevant beyond it is, I suggest, part of the challenge of defining 'South Africaness' beyond the strictures of caricature and category.

Providing: Performance that reflects the imbrications of kinship

The yard's ideological landscape therefore seems to shift as the meanings of kin and of tradition become mediated by the meanings of class and modernity, respectively. By extension, the performance of providing that was part of performing the social and genetic imbrications of fatherhood and manhood within the yard's closed network of kin exchange, no longer seems as effective in determining Sivan's value as being good at a being a man/father. Where the sameness of father and provider is experienced as difference, or, in other words, where the kin body of the provider becomes overshadowed by the experience of commodification, I suggest that traditional performances of kinship need to be recast. This does not imply that the yard's symbols of kin and gender identity are reduced. Rather, they are made sense of in alternative ways. Changing social circumstances thus becomes about re-mapping and, in this case, about unscrambling the social and genetic imbrications of the yard's kinship.

Here, the parallels between reinterpretations of English law pertaining to prohibited degrees of affinity and the re-mapping of yard and kinship boundaries become apparent. In the case of the former, affines who were cohabiting and engaged in sexual relations

were scrambling the social order deemed necessary for stable kinship relations. Immoral relations between affines thus jeopardized the sanctity of normative kinship structures. Rather than leaving such practices to flourish unchecked on the margins of convention, English law retreated to genetic essentialism, reinterpreting, and consequently re-inscribing, the boundaries between blood and affinity. Clearly distinguishable from consanguineous kin, affines thus became eligible as bona fide marriage partners and the integrity of the family was prevented, at least in theory, from being compromised. This is an example of how change, as Abu-Lughod (quoted by Tsing 1993) infers, is made sense of within the contours of power. The yard's particular kind of family integrity required a reversal of this reasoning, such that scrambling was necessary to its interpretation of kinship. The conflation of roles of man, father, brother and provider was as I have tried to show essential to the construction and performance of Sivan's kin and gender identity. Ideally, it is also this conflation that protects identity from becoming commodified. As I have tried to show earlier, reciprocity in the form of love, loyalty and respect, plays a significant part in how the identity of man/father/provider is transacted in the kin network of exchange. In this context, giving his wife and children things as a means to place himself in their lives should not result in Sivan experiencing himself as raped. The fact that it does, suggests that the conflation is not always viable.

Just as the blurring between affines and consanguineous kin activated ideas of immorality and incest, the conflation between father and provider threatens to consume Sivan's kin identity within the idiom of rape and used goods. After all, it is difficult to extract value from performances of being good at being a man/father if you experience your fatherhood as a violation of the self. In this context, it stands to reason that the father must find a way to unscramble his identity from the provider.

In a sense then, this implies that Sivan compromises an important tradition of the yard. This becomes evident when he talks about other Indian businessmen who, similar to himself and Jithen, have focused predominantly, and unquestioningly, on providing for their families. He talks about the Seedat brothers, and J.N Reddy, for example, noting that their reputations as good businessmen, and as good providers were tainted by the fact that they divided their business interests prematurely among their children. These

children, who had been "spoon-fed" had no work ethic and ended up abusing their power, competing for controlling interests, and marginalizing the fathers that had provided for them. As such, the means through which a man/father performs being good at being a man/father becomes subverted and he ends up becoming a pitied man, a mukhu, because he has provided. The contexts within which providing occurs is thus significant.

Sivan expresses his fear that a similar scenario awaits him. He is no longer prepared to provide unchecked if the boundaries of family, within which his performance of the intertwined roles of father/provider make sense and have value, is being compromised. He talks about the "degrading" state of Indian families, of Indian wives and mothers at swingers parties, and of his friend, an advocate at the law firm Shepstone and Wylie, who tells him that divorce among Indians currently makes up the majority of cases on the role. He asks rhetorically, with reference to Sayah: "Have you ever heard before of an Indian mother who wanted to be free of her children," and discusses at length Sayah's abuse of "freedom," of the partying and drinking that she indulges in and the example this sets for his children who now behave as though "drinking alcohol is a national theme." In summary then, the family is not the same, and he says: I feel very much that all my family expects of me is to provide."

Since their separation, Sivan continues to pay the grocery and food bill, and the rates, water and electricity bills. He is also responsible for the repayments on Sayah's BMW Z4, Nivi's Polo sedan and Nilesh's recently purchased Volvo. He tells me also about Sayah's sari that cost seven thousand Rand. Apparently it was the most expensive sari worn at Naveen's wedding. Since their separation, Sayah, however, rarely cooks for Sivan, keeps his house clean, or informs him of her whereabouts, and Sivan's aside that although he provided the sari, Sayah looked the same as everyone else at the wedding, speaks volumes. The inference is that since she does not perform being good at being a woman, she consumes rather than helps to constitute his value as provider.

To address this, I suggest that Sivan seems to tune in to discursive structures beyond the yard, finding alternative ways to mediate the symbolic value of the genetic and social

elements of kinship. With regards to the material wants of his children he has begun questioning how much is too much and he says that when Nivi recently requested a new car, he told her that he would help her on condition that she made an attempt to save towards buying it herself. In relation to the shifting meanings of family he has, to an extent, begun unscrambling the yard's tradition that father is synonymous with provider. Part of this process has, once again, involved a focus on what Herzfeld (1988) refers to as the 'I' of self-regard. This is evident when he says that since he left the yard he has had "reverse ageing" because, unlike Jithen, he has found more time to focus on himself. He notes that the burden of family responsibility was the catalyst that made him realize that he is the most important person and that more of his energy should be focused on himself. This shift in focus has resulted in him spending more time at Sage, which he proudly states has "grown exponentially" since his separation from Sayah. By performing the 'I' of self-regard in this reconceptualised way Sivan is, in effect, tampering with the yard's lexicon, compromising the tradition that providing is a symbol of fatherhood, kinship and collective responsibility. In other words, the anti-commodity contract between people and property is under threat. By tapping into these meanings of kinship, meanings that are surplus in terms of the yard's lexicon, Sivan, I suggest, is performing his difference.

In this reconfigured lexicon, Sivan has the opportunity to re-invent himself since the blurring of father with provider depreciates his value with the stain of commodification. In this context, such blurring is not viable in terms of being good at being a man/father, and in terms of holding onto one's position on the continuum of self and worth. This returns us to the parallels that may be drawn with reinterpretations of English kinship and the ways in which unscrambling the meanings of consanguinity from 'made kin' rescued English kinship, as an institution, from the stain of incest and immorality. Unscrambling imbrications, at least ideologically, therefore made marriage and sexual relations between affines viable. The value, and the integrity, of the family are thus safeguarded. Because of the fact that the identity of provider/father is caught up in the yard's dense web of signification, it is problematic to assume that the distinction between father and provider must be premised on a distinction between the genetic and the social. This would be taking the analogy too far. The principle, however, is similar

since imbrications that serve particular interests in particular contexts must, in different time and space, be reinterpreted as dichotomy. Whether as imbrication or as dichotomy, each remains co-opted within a system of value. I suggest, therefore, that distinguishing between the roles of father and provider, at least ideologically, rescues Sivan's kin identity, as a father and as a provider, from commodification. After all, the provider's identity is only commodified if it is scrambled with fatherhood. This is because in terms of the yard's lexicon of sameness and in terms of its economy of exchange, family is not expected to want, or to take without reciprocating. This is a central theme and I have tried regularly to show that in time and space it impacts on the position that kin members have on the continuum of self and worth, on whether they are valued as good at being men/fathers or women/mothers, and on whether, for instance, they are valued as beautiful, powerful, raped or abject.

In practice, however, affines who marry are not exempt from the role confusion and conflated identities, the very aspects of kinship deemed threatening to the integrity of the family and which prompted the unscrambling of boundaries between blood and affinity in the first place. Simpson (2006) illustrates, for instance, that a man who marries his daughter-in-law becomes father to her child, who is also his grandchild. How does biology and social relations act on each other in what Strathern terms, "the duplex nature of the relational" (Simpson 2006:3) such that the man is valued as both social father and 'real' grandfather or, as more grandfather than father, for instance. Similarly, Sivan continues to be a provider and, in practice, providing remains entwined with performances of being good at being a man/father. The value of father and the value of provider remain contingent then on the quality of the social relations that a man/father/provider has with his kin rather than on any fixed dichotomy between the roles. It is why Sivan, although he has resolved not to follow the path of other Indian businessmen who "provide and provide until they die," is constantly beset by the angst of "how to place [himself] in the lives of [his] children." The tightrope of nylon that he balances on represents, as he notes, his fear of losing them if he is too strict and his fear of losing them if he is not. Extending the metaphor, I suggest that the balancing act is also about how to juggle scrambled identities in relation to unscrambled ones, and by extension, practice in relation to ideology. This returns us to the idea of the skill of

man/father/provider as symbolic medium for it is this skill that enables him to keep his balance on the tightrope. Rephrased, it also prevents him from slipping off the continuum of self and worth, acting as a check on becoming a mukhu or a worthla, a state of dissolution and Otherness epitomised by Sayah's sister's husband, Suren. Imbrications of the genetic and the social, and of father and provider, continues therefore, to persist despite, or perhaps because of, attempts to deconstruct it. This persistence does not, however, detract from the fact that Sivan, or the marrying affines for that matter, are able to exercise reflexivity insofar as they are able to rework ideological spaces and identity within those spaces. It does, however, imply that agency works within the contours of power and that marking the borders of the genetic and the social, of class and kin, and of tradition and modernity, is more about how those borders contribute to our perceptions of cultural value and less about anything definitive.

Accommodating multiple narratives of kin and gender within and across cultural borderlands

In her work on honour and poetry among a Bedouin society, Abu-Lughod (1986), for instance, discusses the disjuncture between the discourse of poetry and everyday social discourses that people use to articulate their experiences. The ordinary discourses are heavy with reference to codes of behaviour befitting the ideals associated with social position. The ideology of kinship, of which agnation, ancestry, gender and age are crucial determinants, plays a vital role in constructing individual and collective identity. In this network, adherence to codes of morality symbolise honour and prestige, for both the individual and the clan to which s/he has claim. Morality, however, means different things for men and women, for old and young, for married and unmarried. While all strive towards the ideal, the path towards moral worth is thus different. This ideology of honour and morality, Abu-Lughod shows, resonate within the discourse of ordinary social life. However, the sentiments that are articulated by the stylised discourse of poetry contest this ideology, often presenting a weakened and more vulnerable image of the self. I raise this to draw parallels with Sivan's case in which the ideal image of powerful patriarch and prestigious provider does not always correspond with interpretations of ordinary experience, including the experience of rape.

The metaphorical line between ideal and practice is a fine one insofar as it is representative of measures of value on the continuum of self and worth. In terms of how identity is negotiated, parallels may also be drawn with Tsing's (1993:213) representation of Meratus women's experiences of what she terms "alien romance" in Kalimantan, Indonesia. This is a term she uses to describe a Meratus woman's sexual, and romantic, liaison with a foreign man. The women involved in these alien romances are considered to be politically, socially and economically marginalized. The foreign men, usually Japanese officers, who they enter into relationships with, take them in, and feed and clothe them. Tsing describes this as a Meratus woman's opportunity to indulge in luxury, a description based on the fact that these women do nothing all day except wait for their men to return to the barracks. The services they perform for their foreign lovers include bathing and drying him as well as sexual services. Some of these women were paid for performing such services. Eventually, however, these men moved to different areas, or their wives come to visit them, and the Meratus women return to their homes. These women using idioms of laughter, recounted tales of choosing to leave men who they described as being deeply in love with them and who had begged them to return. Initially, I found this hard to grasp, thinking solely in terms of sexual exploitation and conventional ideas on gender until I realized that these women may also be articulating their experiences in ways that disassociate them from a negative reality. Instead of emphasising experiences of exploitation, Tsing seems to engage with narrative co-texts, choosing to depict the laughter of Meratus women who had travelled beyond their villages in a time where travel for women was dangerous and when most women did not travel, as symbolic of bravado. Portraying them as brave women who were willing to challenge status quos rather than as women who allowed themselves to be bound within idioms of exploitation, thus makes sense of Meratus women's expression that they had chosen to leave men who were deeply in love with them, and not vice versa.

I have tried to illustrate throughout this work how multiple narratives of kin and gender intersect within and across the boundaries of the yard as informants mediate the symbols of identity. In relation to the issues I emphasise and try to draw together here, I am reminded of one of the more poignant of these examples. When Sayah tells me

about Asodi, “the slut” that Sivan had a brief affair with, and whose husband, Chico, shot and killed her and then himself after learning of her infidelity, I am stunned by the violence and tragedy. I focus only on Sayah and her trauma, horrified also by the fact that Sivan’s mistress paid with her life for not being good at being a woman while Sivan seems to bear little culpability. Here, I am able to draw an analogy with my reaction of disbelief to Meratus women’s expressions of love and laughter in relation to their experiences of alien romance. Both, I realise later have been schooled within the context of mainstream feminist discourse, where ideology pertaining to the universal subordination of women often appears relatively fixed in relation to male dominance (Ortner 1984). In this singular, though by no means reduced narrative, my focus is consumed by idioms of women’s oppression, and the injustice and double standards that women such as Sayah, and Asodi, suffer because their particular performances ‘denature’ the symbols upon which a woman’s self and worth is premised. As such they bear the rancour of those around them for challenging gender and kin status quos and refusing to stick and stay.

An incident that occurs many months later, towards the very end of my research, heightens my awareness of the other, often subjugated, narratives that also exist within this context of oppression, violence and tragedy. Seelan, Sagrie’s (Jithen’s daughter) husband has just committed suicide. Sayah is inconsolable and I am told that Sagrie left Seelan a few months before his death, taking virtually everything from their house with her. Thereafter, Sagrie had allegedly rebuffed Seelan’s constant attempts to reconcile. Sayah and her children together with Dashni and her children have just returned from Seelan’s house in which all the members of the yard had gathered to witness the dead body being removed by the local police. According to her, Seelan’s empty house with little more than a plate, a spoon, a knife, a cup, a pot and a mattress, was testimony to Sagrie’s greed. During the time of the funeral Sayah, Dashni, and their children talk about the fact that Seelan was poor and could not maintain the lifestyle in which Jithen had kept his daughter. They say that he killed himself because of the shame of being left by his wife, a “spoiled brat” for whom he could not provide adequately. Sayah notes tellingly that Sagrie and her mother, Gita, would buy things for the house, letting Seelan know that what he was able to provide was not good enough. “They were trying to turn

him into a mukhu. How can a man live with that?" she asks. A few hours later, I hear from Kalay and Nivi that their father has echoed Sayah's sentiments and had said to them that Sagrie "had sent Seelan to his grave."

Within this unfolding drama and tragedy I realise that Chico had also been turned into a mukhu, unable to perform being good at being a man because his wife's infidelity was, in a sense, representative of his fall from the continuum of self and worth. Similarly, inasmuch as Sayah had been violated and betrayed by Sivan's affair, her refusal to stick and stay had also threatened his position as king of the jungle on the continuum of self and worth. Once again, this illustrates that performances of being good at being women seem to correlate with how the value of men/fathers are measured on the continuum of self and worth. In a sense then, men's/father's very dependency for self and worth on the gendered and kin meanings of women creates the need to control the discursive network that constructs and supports that status quo. This also, however, implies the possibility of a loss of control such that the symbols of woman – of sticking and staying, of domesticity, and of mothering where being king of the jungle is not natural – also have the potential to be thwarted. In this scenario, surplus meanings are tapped into and although this means that Sayah shifts from a thing of beauty to "rubbish," and that Asodi and Sagrie exchange good at being women for "slut" and greedy brat, respectively, such shifts, instead of being interpreted as extensions of oppression, may also be reinterpreted as symbolic of power. This creative potential highlights the possibilities for change insofar as such change points to a reinterpretation, and thus a re-evaluation, of particular symbols of kin and gender identity.

Similarly, a man's/father's performance of dominance may also be about his struggle against annihilation, especially in contexts where the symbols of one's value as a man/father are constructed, perpetuated and recognised not just by men but by women also. In the process of mediating symbols of identity, the borders of ideological space therefore intersect in complicated ways with idioms of experience. This includes the ways in which Sivan uses idioms of commodification to construct a reality of rape and violation. Within dominant narratives, this is a reality that is at odds with the presumed dominance and prestige of the excellent provider. However, the boundaries of rape and

prestige are not mutually exclusive if each represents a position on the continuum of self and worth, a position that depending on specific meanings of kinship may be reflexively expressed as rape or prestige, or composites of in-between, so as to make sense of varying experiences of reality.

However, the irony of reflexivity, as Zizek (1999) implies, is that it is about the freedom to choose one's own rules and not, therefore, about being completely external to structure. Regulation, he notes, thus has the potential to give rise to agency if it is reinterpreted as: "you may!" (Zizek 1999). By extension, it also becomes about the ways in which one chooses to use the rules to draw the myriad boundaries of kinship, gender, race and class that mark out sameness from difference. This, Zizek (1999:2) notes, is because reflexivity and agency connect to the process of "dealing with an imaginary cartography, which projects onto the real landscape its own shadowy ideological antagonisms." However, the yard, considered as a two-way map of meaning in which the self, as Sax (1998) notes, stands not opposed to the Other but a reflection of it. It may thus be conceived as a trope for the dialectic of sameness and difference, where such a dialectic manifests in the intersections of performance and ideology, of the genetic and the social, of tradition and modernity, of continuity and change, of power and powerlessness – and of the real and the imaginary. Identity thus becomes more than imprisonment within a carceral network (Foucault in Butler 1977); it becomes a matter of perspective as well. Therefore, by considering the dynamics of kin and gender identity in and beyond the yard space, especially in relation to the imperative to be *good at*, I have begun to think that insight is perhaps facilitated if these dynamics are explored as series of imbrications within discursive networks of value, rather than as sets of oppositions fixed in social categories. In choosing the boundaries within which to position the self as man/father, the question of how to distinguish the "shadowy ideological antagonisms" (Zizek 1999:2) of an imaginary cartography from "the real landscape" (Zizek 1999:2) thus remains.

Endnotes

[1] A mukhu is the derogatory term that informants use in reference to a man who is seen to do women's work and who allows his authority to be challenged by women.
[2] Once predominantly an Indian residential area. Many Indians have over time left the area, especially with the development of other Indian areas, such as Chatsworth.
[3] I draw on Shipton's (1989:10) concept of anti-commodities that refers to how value is made from what is assumed to be an unbroken attachment between particular persons or groups and particular property of certain kinds. If the attachment is broken, value alters.
[4] Although the yard represents a microcosm of cultural homogeneity, this does not deny the variation of cultural meanings that may exist among its members.
[5] Orientalism refers broadly to Said's charge that Western students of oriental civilization studied what they themselves had constructed the Orient to be. Exaggerated differences between the West and the oriental others were thus produced for political, and other, agendas (In Sax 1998:292).
[6] Sax suggests that the other represents a mirror in which aspects of the self are reflected (1998:294-298).
[7] Hindu festival where the lighting of lamps to celebrate the return of the gods Rama and Sita from exile, symbolizes the triumph of good over evil.
[8] Errington and Gewurtz (2001) use the term cultural generification to refer to the ways in which particular knowledge and discourse is translated into general frames of reference.
[9] Errington and Gewurtz (2001) use the term cultural generification to refer to the ways in which particular knowledge and discourse is translated into general frames of reference.
[10] During the colonial period, Lord Milner referred to Indians in South Africa as "strangers" and later, the National Party's election manifesto stated that: "Indians are a foreign and outlandish element which is inassimilable." www.indiandiaspora.nic.in/diasporapdf/chapter7.pdf
[11] Information from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chatsworth,_Durban
[12] Ibid
[13] A nightclub in Umhlanga, Durban North.
[14] A term commonly used among Indians from Chatsworth to refer to their fathers.
[15] A fast food chain specializing in spicy grilled chicken.
[16] Dried split peas boiled till resembling a soup like consistency and seasoned with chili and garlic. It is a cheap meal that is eaten regularly in many Indian households in and around Chatsworth.
[17] The Recognition of Customary Marriages Act 12 of 1998 recognises marriages formalized according to African indigenous customs. This, however, continues to preclude marriages formalized according to Hindu and Muslim religious customs (Budlender, Chokbokoane and Simelane 2004).
[18] According to *Family Law and Violence against Women,* taken from www.paralegaladvice.org.za/docs/chap07/02.html
[19] According to an article by Pauw, L. on www.health24.com the definition of incest in South Africa is restricted to sex relations with blood relatives and, unlike many other countries, does not include a full-spectrum definition that extends to emotional bonds with caregivers, teachers, etc.
[20] Bollywood actresses.
[21] A technique in which a reel of cotton is held in one hand while the thread is wound around the index finger of each hand and used to pluck eyebrows.
[22] A blend of Hindi music and dance styles with western pop music.
[23] An alcoholic beverage.
[24] Historically an Indian area. It merges with parts of Chatsworth, namely Havenside and Unit One. Since 1994, Africans, predominantly from the nearby township of Umlazi, have gradually begun moving into the area.

References

Abu-Lughod, L. 1986 *Veiled Sentiments: Honour and Poetry in a Bedouin Society* University of California Press Berkeley

Appiah, A. 1997 "The Multiculturalist Misunderstanding" *New York Review of Books* October 9 1997, 1-11

Bordo, S. 1993 "The Body and the Reproduction of Femininity" in *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture and the Body* University of California Press Berkeley

Bordo, S. 1993 "Reading the Slender Body" in *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture and the Body* University of California Press Berkeley

Boskovic, A. 1998 "Postmodernism, Anthropology and Common Sense" Manuscript

Briggs, C. 1996 "The Politics of discursive Authority in Research on the 'Invention of Tradition'" *Cultural Anthropology* 11(4), 435-469

Brightman, R. 1995 "Forget Culture: Replacement, transcendence, relexification" *Cultural Anthropology* 10(4), 509-546

Budlender, D. Chocbokoane, N. and Simelane, S. 2004 "Marriage Patterns in South Africa: Methodological and Substantive Issues" *South African Journal of Demography* 9(1) www.commerce.uct.ac.za/Organisations/Demography/SAJournalofDemography

Butler, J. 1977 *The Psychic Life of Power* Stanford University Press Stanford

Chatsworth, Durban http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chatsworth,_Durban

Clifford, J. 1986 “Introduction: Partial Truths” in Clifford, J. and Marcus, G. (ed) *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* University of California Press Berkley

Carsten, J. and Hugh-Jones, S. 1995 *About the House* Cambridge University Press Cambridge

Conway, D. 2001 “Exploring South African Masculinities” *AGENDA* No49 101

Coplan, D. 1998 “Fieldsights: The Anthropological Narration of Post-Apartheid South Africa” *African Studies* 57(2)

Crapanzano, V. 1985 *Tuhami: Portrait of a Moroccan* Chicago Chicago University Press

Curtis, D. 2004 “Commodities and sexual subjectivities: A look at capitalism and its desires” *Cultural Anthropology* 19(1), 95-121

Dhupelia-Mesthrie, U. 2000 *From Cane Fields to Freedom: A Chronicle of Indian South African Life* Kwela Books Cape Town

Edwards, J. 2004 “Incorporating incest: gamete, body and relation in assisted conception” Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute 10(4), 755-774

Engle, P. 1994 *Men in Families: Report of a consultation on the role of males an fathers in achieving gender equality* UNICEF New York

Errington, F. and Gewurtz, D. 2001 “On the Generification of Culture: From Blowfish to Melanesian” *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 7(3), 509-525

Family Law and Violence Against Women
www.paralegaladvice.org.za/docs/chap07/02.html

Fishburn, K. 1982 "Women in fashion, advertising, sports and comics" in *Women in Popular Culture: A Reference Guide* Greenwood Press Connecticut

Foucault, M. 1976 "Two Lectures" in Dirks, N. Eley, G. and Ortner, S. (ed) *Culture/Power/History* Princeton Princeton University Press

Fox, R. 1967 "The incest problem" in *Kinship and Marriage: An Anthropological Perspective* Penguin London

Freund, B. 1995 *Insiders and Outsiders: the Indian Working class of Durban 1910-1990* Pietermaritzburg University of Natal Press

Gellner, E. 1987 *The Concept of Kinship and Other Essays* Basil Blackwell Ltd Oxford

Gutman, M.C. 1996 "Real Mexican Machos are Born to Die" in *The Meanings of Macho: Being a Man in Mexico City* University of California Press Berkeley

Hastrup, K. 1997 "The Dynamics of Anthropological Theory" *Cultural Dynamics* 9(3), 351-371

Herzfeld, M. 1988 *The Poetics of Manhood: Contest and Identity in a Cretan Mountain Village* Princeton University Press

Hunter, M 2004 "The Disempowered Provider" *Children First* Issue 58

Lancaster, R. 1992 "Subject Honour, Object Shame" in *Life is Hard: Machismo, Danger, and the Intimacy of Power in Nicaragua* University of California Press Berkeley

Liechty, M. 2005 “Carnal Economies: The commodification of food and sex in Kathmandu” *Cultural Anthropology* 20(1), 1-38

Meer, F. 1991 “The Foundations of Women’s Domination” in *Black Woman Worker: A Study in Patriarchy and Woman Production Workers in South Africa* Institute for Black Research Madiba Publishers

Moore, H. 1988 “Gender and status: Explaining the Position of Women” in *Feminism and Anthropology* University of Minnesota Press Minneapolis

Ortner, S. 1984 “Theory in Anthropology Since the Sixties” in Dirks, N. Eley, G. and Ortner, S. (ed) *Culture/Power/History* Princeton Princeton University Press

Pauw, I. “Incest: SA kids at Risk” *Health 24*
www.health24.com

Report of the High Level Commission on the Indian Diaspora – South Africa
www.indiandiaspora.nic.in/diasporapdf/chapter7.pdf

Rodseth, L. 1998 “Distributive Models of Culture: A Sapirian Alternative to Essentialism” *American Anthropologist* 100(1), 55-69

Sahlins, M. 1999 “Two or Three Things that I Know About Culture” *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 5(3), 399-422

Sax, W.S. 1998 “The Hall of Mirrors: Orientalism, Anthropology and the Other” *American Anthropologist* 100(2), 292-299

Schneider, D.M. 1968 *American Kinship: A Cultural Account* University of Chicago Press Chicago

Sharp, J. 1997 “Beyond Exposé and Analysis: Hybridity, Social Memory, and Identity Politics” *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 15(1), 7-21

Shipton, P. 1989 *Bitter Money: Cultural Economy and Some African meanings of Forbidden Economies* American Ethnological Society Monograph Series Number 1 Washington

Sideras, T. 2004 “You have to change and you don’t know how! Contesting what it means to be a man in a rural area of South Africa” *African Studies Journal* 63(1)

Simpson, B. 2006 “Scrambling parenthood: English kinship and the prohibited degrees of affinity” *Anthropology Today* 22(3), 3-6

Singh, A. 1996 “Variation and Fluidity in Household Composition in Phoenix, Durban” *Social Dynamics* 22(1) 97-116

Smit, R. 2006 “The Changing Role of the Husband/Father in the Dual-Earner Family in South Africa” Unpublished thesis

Spiegel, A.D. “Struggling with Tradition in South Africa: The multivocality of images of the past” in Gilliam, A. and Bond, G. (eds.) *The Social Construction of the Past: Representation as Power* London Routledge 185-202

Spiegel, A.D. and McAllister, P.A. (eds.) 1991 *Tradition and Transition in Southern Africa* Witwatersrand University Press Johannesburg South Africa

Spiegel, A.D. Watson, V. and Wilkinson, P. 1996 “Domestic diversity and fluidity among some African households in Greater Cape Town” Social Dynamics 22(1) 7-30

Strathern, M. 1981 *Kinship at the Core* Cambridge University Press

Strathern, M. 1988 *The Gender of the Gift* University of California Press Berkley Los Angeles London

Thornton, R. 2000 "The land, landscape and landspace in South Africa" *Sociocultural Anthropology at the turn of the Century: Voices from the Periphery* Edited by Skalnik, P. Set Out Press Prague

Tsing, A.L. 1993 *In The Realm of the Diamond* Queen Princeton University Press Princeton New Jersey

Weber, M. 1968 *Economy and Society Volume 3* Bedminster Press Incorporated New York

Zizek, S. 1999 "You May!" *London Review of Books* 21(6) 1-10 Oxford University Press http://www.lrb.co.uk/v21/n06/zize2106.htm

Appendix A **Kinship diagram connecting the people of the yard**

